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Aristotle's Ideals of Friendship and Virtue

by

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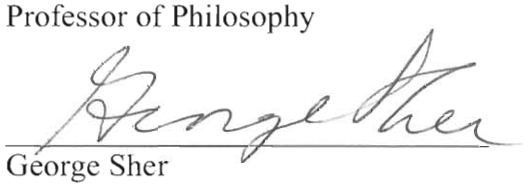

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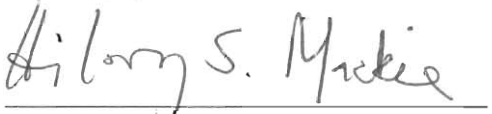

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ABSTRACT

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Aristotle's *eudaimonism* commits him to holding that the virtuous agent chooses everything ultimately for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.* But within this eudaimonist framework, Aristotle claims that the agent must value his friend for the friend's sake, and that he must choose virtuous actions for themselves. How can we make sense of these claims within Aristotle's eudaimonist framework?

I argue that Aristotle holds that there is a necessary, conceptual connection between valuing a friend for the friend's sake and valuing a friend for the sake of one's own happiness, and likewise for virtue. In friendship, this view of Aristotle's is buttressed by his potent but inchoate view that true friends are a "single soul", a fact not recognized by most commentators. I develop this view at length and show that Aristotle thinks that through a friendship, the character and well-being of each friend is essentially shaped by, and defined by reference to, the other. This both explains and justifies friends in perceiving their relationship as a unit and being motivated by what I call "We-Attitudes". To the extent that friends are a single soul, it is not the case that I value my friend for my sake or that he values me for his sake. Rather, it is the single soul that values itself for its own sake.

Concerning virtue, I argue that Aristotle holds that to choose a virtuous action for its own sake is to choose it for those features of it that make it a virtuous action. Since it

is an essential feature of any virtuous action that it actualizes the agent's capacity for virtue – which is that in which *eudaimonia* primarily consists - it must be chosen for this feature of it. Anticipating the worry that Aristotle's virtuous agent does not have a proper regard for others, I show that there are at least some virtuous actions whose essential features refer plainly to the well-being of others. Therefore, these actions are chosen both for these features and for their eudaimonic features, *without* one set of features being valued for the sake of the other set.

For Edward

ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀδελφικῇ ἅπερ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἑταιρικῇ καὶ μᾶλλον ἐν τοῖς ἐπιεικέσι, καὶ ὅλως ἐν τοῖς ὁμοίοις, ὅσῳ οἰκειότεροι καὶ ἐκ γενετῆς ὑπάρχουσι στέργοντες ἀλλήλους, καὶ ὅσῳ ὁμοηθέστεροι οἱ ἐκ τῶν αυτῶν καὶ σύντροφοι καὶ παιδευθέντες ὁμοίως· καὶ ἡ κατὰ τὸν χρόνον δοκιμασία πλείστη καὶ βεβοιατάτη.

--Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII.8 1162a10-14

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* * * * * * *

Many years ago I made the decision to pursue an academic career in philosophy. Now some ten or so years later, it's a surreal feeling having gotten to this point. And I feel very fortunate that I have so many wonderful people to thank for helping me get here. I would like now to thank all of those special individuals who have played a significant role in getting me to the end of what has been a very long journey.

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were around today I think they would say that I owe more to my parents than I could ever repay. And they would be right. I do not quite know how to put into words the gratitude I feel for their support, nor do I quite know how to describe the nature of their support in the way that would do it justice. But I do know just how fortunate I am to be their son.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DA	*De Anima*
EE	*Eudemian Ethics*
MM	*Magna Moralia*
Met.	*Metaphysics*
NE	*Nicomachean Ethics*

TRANSLATIONS

For *De Anima*, I use J.A. Smith's translation, in Barnes' *Complete Works of Aristotle* (1984).

For *Eudemian Ethics,* I use the translation of J. Solomon, also in Barnes (1984).

For *Magna Moralia,* I use the translation of St. G. Stock, also in Barnes (1984)

For *Nicomachean Ethics* Books VIII and IX, I use Pakaluk (1998). For all other books in the *NE*, I use Irwin (1999).

For *Metaphysics,* I use the translation of W.D. Ross, found in Barnes (1984).

At times I amend or depart from these translations, and when I do so I indicate it in the footnotes.

I

Introduction

1. The Problem of Motivation

In her famous 1958 polemic, Elizabeth Anscombe wrote that "anyone who has read Aristotle's *Ethics* and has also read modern moral philosophy must have been struck by the great contrasts between them."[1] If by 'modern moral philosophy' one means the theories handed down to us from Kant and Mill, then Anscombe is right – there are indeed great contrasts. The greatest contrast, in my view, lies in the fact that for Aristotle (and for Greek ethicists generally), there is a deep connection for an individual agent between being ethical and being happy. Moral virtue (ἠθικὴ ἀρετή), according to Aristotle, is that which makes for a good functioning human being (*NE* I.7 1098a8-15; I.13 1102b14-1103a4), and happiness (*eudaimonia*) *is* good functioning (*NE* I.7 1097b22-1098a21). So deep is this connection, Aristotle thought, that those who were not ethical could not attain happiness. Indeed, the vicious "hate and flee from life because of their badness and, destroy themselves" (*NE* IX.4 1166b13-14). Moreover, "since bad people have nothing lovable about them, they lack any friendly feelings toward themselves" (*NE* IX.4 1166b18-19). Such is the price of vice. In contrast, "the prize and goal of virtue appears to be the best good, something divine and blessed" (*NE* I.9 1099b16-17). Thus, the virtuous person "wishes to spend time with himself, since he acts on his own with pleasure: since his memories of past deeds are enjoyable" (*NE* IX.4

[1] Anscombe (1958, 1).

1166a23-25). And not only does the virtuous person consistently do the right thing, but he does it *with pleasure.*[2]

It is no doubt an attractive picture that Aristotle paints of the ethical life. If he's right about how good this life is, then we all have good reason, it seems, to be ethical. It is *this* aspect of Aristotle's ethics that leads to the main problem to be addressed in this dissertation. I call it 'The Problem of Motivation', since it arises from the fact that Aristotle ascribes what appear to be conflicting motives to the virtuous agent.[3] No doubt Aristotle thinks that any human being is better off – is *happier* – if he lives the ethical life of virtue than if not. What motivates the virtuous to be virtuous, Aristotle thinks, is the quest for their own *eudaimonia* (*NE* I.7 1097b1-5).[4] And yet we are also told that virtuous actions must be chosen *for themselves* (δι' αὐτά), and that those who do not choose virtuous actions for themselves do not count as virtuous (*NE* II.4 1105a32).

In strikingly similar fashion, in his account of *philia,* Aristotle claims that we must value our friends *for themselves* (δι' αὐτοῦς) (*NE* VIII.3 1156b10-11 1157b3) while also claiming that the virtuous agent cares for his friend for a plethora of self-regarding reasons.[5] We may sum those reasons up simply with the claim that the agent cares for his

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[2] *NE* I.8 1099a15-25. Indeed, he must do it with pleasure in order to be truly virtuous.

[3] It is of course worth noting that Aristotle does not seem to recognize a conflict with respect to these two motives, which I shall have more to say about in section 1.3 shortly after expounding the nature of the problem. For now suffice to say that I mean that from our point of view, we would recognize these motives as potentially being in tension with one another.

[4] "Honor, pleasure, understanding, and every virtue we certainly choose because of themselves, since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result; but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, supposing that through them we shall be happy." I will have more to say about this passage as we move forward.

[5] Some of those reasons are: 1) He sees his friend as his "other self", which may imply that he cares for his friend just to the extent that he sees himself in his friend (*NE* IX.4 1166a1-34); 2) He loves his own being and activity, and sees his friend as an extension of his own activity (*NE* IX.7 1168a2-6); 3) He is a self-

friend for the sake of *his own* happiness – a claim to which Aristotle's eudaimonism must in some sense commit him. After all, "anyone who is to be happy will need friends who are good" (*NE* IX.9 1170b18). No one, Aristotle thinks, would choose to live without friends "even if he had every other good thing" (*NE* VIII.1 1155a6).

So, according to Aristotle, the virtuous agent chooses X both for its own sake and for the sake of Y, where:

Case 1: X = virtue
Y = one's own happiness

Case 2: X = the good of one's friend
Y = one's own happiness

Now, why is this a problem? In short, each case generates two *prima facie* difficulties, one conceptual and one moral. It is important to keep these two difficulties separate. The two difficulties are explained in the following two sections. Then, in section 1.3, I explain in greater detail the sense in which the problem of motivation is *Aristotle's* problem. In section 1.4, I shall state my aim in treating that problem.

1.1. The Conceptual Difficulty

The most natural meaning of 'choosing X *for itself*' is 'to choose X independently of how X contributes to one's own happiness.'[6] The conceptual difficulty, therefore, is that to choose something *for itself* thereby precludes choosing it for any other reason. If this is right, it rules out the possibility of choosing some virtuous action *both* for itself

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lover (φίλαυτος) who seeks the noble (τὸ καλόν), the greatest good, wanting it for himself (*NE* IX.8 1169a22-30). In addition, Aristotle tells us that by loving our friends, we love what is good for ourselves (*NE* VIII.5 1157b33-35), and that "each person wishes good things to himself most of all" (*NE* VIII.7 1159a12).

[6] I will have more to say about this shortly in section 1.5. This is how many commentators understand the locution "for itself". See e.g. Cooper (1980, 334) and Kraut (1989, ch.2).

and for the sake of one's own happiness, and likewise for choosing to benefit and value one's friend. Now, this may seem very unlikely, since it is generally quite possible to choose some action for multiple reasons. We do so frequently. But the worry here, again, is that choosing something *for itself* carries with it special restrictions. The reason for this is as follows: If X is desired for its own sake, then X is an ultimate aim, and so the desire for X is an independent desire. But if X is desired for the sake of something else, X is not an ultimate aim, and so the desire for X depends on the desire for something else. To say that X is desired both for its own sake and for the sake of Y would imply that X both is and is not an ultimate aim, and that the desire for X is both a dependent and independent desire.[7]

1.2. The Moral Difficulty

By contrast, the moral difficulty is that self-regarding motives spoil other-regarding motives and make for, in one way or another, a morally deficient agent. An example of this view is found in Kant. Kant contrasts acting from the motive of duty with acting from immediate inclination, and claims that only agents who act solely from duty have moral worth. The following passage from the *Groundwork* is telling:

> On the other hand, to preserve one's life is a duty, and besides everyone has an immediate inclination to do so. *But on this account* the often anxious care that most people take of it still has no inner worth and their maxim has no moral content [my emphasis]. They look after their lives in conformity with duty but not from duty. On the other hand, if adversity and hopeless grief have quite taken away the taste for life; if an unfortunate man, strong of soul and more indignant about his fate than despondent or defected, wishes for death and yet preserves his life without loving it, not from inclination or fear but from duty, then his maxim has a moral import. (G 398)

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[7] This is how Prichard (1967, 250-1) puts the point.

What Kant appears to be saying in this passage is that the very presence of immediate inclination precludes an action from having moral worth, and that it is *only* when inclination *is not present at all* that an action comes to have moral worth.[8] What Kant does not state explicitly here but is still implied is that an agent *can* be motivated by considerations of duty *and* by immediate inclination, and when this happens, the motive from immediate inclination morally undermines the motive from considerations of duty.

Now, we might think that Kant's view is simply too strong and unreasonable and therefore not be moved by it. We might not want to endorse the view that agents who act from self-regarding motives are *thereby* prevented from having moral worth, even if they also act from other-regarding motives. That thesis seems too strong. But I think there is something right about Kant's view, and that it at least supports the following weaker but important thesis: Agents who are motivated by moral reasons alone are morally better than agents who are motivated by moral reasons + self-regarding reasons. So an agent who acts from both self-regarding and other-regarding motives might still have some degree of moral worth, but he still shows a defect. Bringing the discussion back to Aristotle - *eudaimonia* consists in the actualization of our essential human capacities. Developing and acting in accordance with the virtues of character actualizes those capacities. So, take the virtue of generosity (ἐλευθεριότης), and compare the following two agents, David and Jason. Suppose that they both have an opportunity to give a healthy sum of money to a local charity that will use the money to better the lives of children in serious need. Suppose David sees this opportunity and gives the money,

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[8] I am aware that attributing this view to Kant is controversial. Many scholars have tried to interpret Kant in a way that does not require this interpretation. See Hensen (1979) for a thorough discussion of the interpretative options and for an argument for why the interpretation I attribute here to Kant is the correct one.

having no other thought than: "This is the virtuous thing to do," while Jason gives the money and also has that thought, but in addition has the thought: "This is a chance to actualize my essential human capacities and achieve *eudaimonia*." At least *prima facie,* David is the morally better agent in this case.[9]

The same intuition is generated in the case of friendship. Take Jimmy and Cedric, who are both friends with Charles. Charles is struggling mightily in his Ph.D. program in Classics and needs tremendous help in learning Latin. Both Jimmy and Cedric happen to be an experts in Latin, and so they both offer to lend a helping hand to Charles, which entails a great amount of sacrificed time on the parts of Jimmy and Cedric. When Jimmy decides to help Charles, he has only the thought, "Charles is my friend and needs the help." But when Cedric decides to help Charles, although he has the same thought that Jimmy has, he *also* has the thought, "This is something beneficial for me to do from the stand-point of my own well-being, for Charles adds value to my life in a lot of ways." *Prima facie,* Jimmy is a better friend than Charles.

1.3. The Problem of Motivation as Aristotle's Problem

The fact that Aristotle ascribes both motives to the agent, then, is problematic. By "problematic", I mean that from our modern philosophical point of view, Aristotle is stuck with the problem of motivation. Now, it is striking that in neither the case of virtue nor the case of friendship does Aristotle seem to acknowledge the problem of motivation as I have formulated it. But it is clear that he does think that the virtuous agent values

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[9] This is something with which even a consequentialist can agree. A consequentialist may deny that the value of *actions* is a function of how they are chosen, but he may agree (as Mill does) that the value of the agent is a function of his motives, i.e. how he chooses his actions.

both virtue and the well-being of his friend from both self-regarding and other-regarding motives. Consider the following passage:

> Honor, pleasure, understanding, and every virtue we certainly choose because of themselves, since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result; but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, supposing that through them we shall be happy (*NE* I.7, 1097b1-5).[10]

With respect to the problem of motivation in the case of virtue as I have formulated it, Aristotle does not directly address it much more than he does in this passage. He simply grants that the agent has both motives. In the case of friendship, he never explicitly raises the question of how loving one's friend on account of the kind of self-regarding reasons he mentions can be consistent with loving one's friend for the friend's sake. This should give us some pause, and it deserves further comment. What should we infer from the fact that Aristotle does not explicitly acknowledge this problem?

We might infer that Aristotle did not care about the problem and that it is therefore a misguided effort to try to solve it on his behalf. To attempt to do so would be to impose our own modern preoccupations on his philosophy and make us guilty of anachronism. But I think that this inference is itself mistaken for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is good reason to think that Aristotle must have been cognizant of the problem. Plato, after all, raises the very problem itself in the *Lysis.* Socrates presents a view of human motivation according to which to love or feel affection for any object is to see that object as a source of something one thinks worth having. But in order to feel this way, one must be lacking in or needing something, and to that extent in an undesirable state. But the proper object of love must be desired purely for its own sake (*Lysis* 219d-221d). And so the dilemma: how can the proper object of love be desired purely for its

[10] Though this is put here in terms of having an attitude toward virtue generally, it gets cashed out in terms of choosing virtuous *actions* for themselves. See *NE* II.4 1105a27-1105b1.

own sake while nonetheless it appears that the agent must want something for himself in desiring it?[11] If Plato was aware of this problem, it is likely that Aristotle was aware of it too.

We also find in the *Nicomachean Ethics* itself passages in which Aristotle claims that there are certain motives that are inconsistent with the motive to value something for its own sake. For instance, when we are motivated to act courageously from anger or from the pleasure of retaliation, we're not really being courageous (*NE* III.8 1117a7-9; see also *NE* IV.1 1120a28-29 for similar remarks about generosity). Aristotle does not mention how the motive to advance one's own *eudaimonia* factors into the equation, but his disdain for other motives surely raises the very question of how that motive factors. In the case of friendship, Aristotle derides pleasure and utility friendships precisely because the motivation in such friendships is tainted by self-interest (*NE* VIII.3 1156a10-16). Yet he has no problem claiming that in character friendship it is perfectly natural to love a friend on account of the friend being an extension of *one's own* activity (*NE* IX.7 1168a2-6), which is straightforwardly a self-interested motive. Again, this raises the question of how Aristotle understands the status of this motive in relation to the motive to love a friend for the friend's sake.

Of course, as I have recognized, Aristotle does not explicitly take up the problem. Now, readers of Aristotle know that he has a knack for spotting tensions and resolving them. The *Nicomachean Ethics* itself is filled with a plethora of these *aporiai*, and spotting and resolving them is an integral part of Aristotle's philosophical method. This is why I think it is very much worth asking: Why does Aristotle show little to no

[11] Socrates flatly acknowledges this tension, and though he tries somewhat to resolve it at the end of the dialogue, the dialogue ends in *aporia* (221e-223b).

awareness of this problem? Why, exactly, does Aristotle seem to so comfortably countenance certain self-regarding motives when it comes to acting virtuously and when it comes to valuing a friend? One option might be to explain this by appealing to certain cultural specific norms of Aristotle's time. As a Greek eudaimonist, Aristotle just doesn't quite see the split between morality and self-interest in the way that modern moral philosophers do. That claim itself is one to which I am sympathetic. But if *that's* the right explanation, it just raises the question of what it could mean, in a eudaimonist framework, to value virtuous actions and friends *for themselves.* And so another option is to examine Aristotle's account of friendship and his account of virtue of character, in conjunction with his eudaimonism, and see what philosophical resources he has at his disposal that may explain how *he* thought these two motives go together, both conceptually and morally.

1.4. Aim of the Dissertation

My aim in this dissertation, then, is to determine how Aristotle understands the relation between the self-regarding and other-regarding motives when they coexist in the virtuous agent, and to determine whether and how, for both the case of friendship and of virtue and happiness, Aristotle may avoid the conceptual and moral difficulties. The moral difficulty deserves further comment. It is here worth noting that the scholarship is divided pretty evenly on whether Aristotle's account has the morally troubling feature implied by the moral difficulty. There are some scholars who think that the right way to interpret Aristotle is that the agent is not *at all* motivated by his own *eudaimonia*, and

chooses virtuous actions and the well-being of friends only for themselves.[12] On the other hand, there are other scholars who claim that, although Aristotle's accounts of friendship and of virtue may not be militantly egoistic, they are still ultimately selfish. He can't quite make good on the claim that the agent values these things for their own sakes because the agent's ultimate concern is with his own *eudaimonia.*[13]

To be clear – I do not hold the view that we should avoid as much as possible interpreting Aristotle's account in such a way that casts it as morally objectionable from a modern point of view. However, I plan to show that Aristotle's accounts of friendship and virtue *do not* have the morally troubling features they are often thought to have, but I plan to do this in a way that shows that *both* sets of scholars in the previous paragraph are mistaken. Aristotle's accounts of friendship and of virtue turn out to be more interesting than has been thought.

The remainder of this chapter lays out the framework of possible solutions that will be taken up in subsequent chapters, and outlines the view for which I will ultimately argue. Chapters II and III address the case of friendship. Chapter IV addresses the case of virtue and happiness. But before laying out the framework of possible solutions, a brief discursion into what it means to choose something for itself is in order.

1.5. Valuing Something For its Own Sake

[12] E.g. Annas (1977 and 1988), Whiting (2002 and 2006).

[13] E.g. Ross (1923, 208; 231-32), Milgram (1987), Gottlieb (1996).

Throughout this dissertation, the phrases "for its own sake" and "for itself" will be used interchangeably, just as Aristotle uses them interchangeably.[14] What does it mean to value and choose something for its own sake – for itself? I said above that it at least means to choose something independently of how it contributes to one's own happiness, and that this is how many commentators understand it. I want to say a little bit more about it here. As I take up the possible solutions to the problem of motivation, I begin with the assumption that when Aristotle says that we value X for its own sake, he means the following two things:

1) X is valued and chosen independently of how X contributes to one's own happiness.

2) X is taken as something that, by itself, provides a reason to promote it.

So, when Aristotle says that we wish for and act for the good of a friend for the sake of that friend (or "for himself", as Aristotle also says), I begin with the assumption that he means that we a) value our friend independently of how he contributes to our own happiness, and b) take the good of our friend as something that by itself provides a reason to promote it.[15] Likewise in Chapter IV with the case of virtue and happiness: When Aristotle says that we choose virtuous actions for themselves, I begin with the assumption that he means that we a) value virtuous actions independently of how they contribute to our own happiness, and b) take the fact that some action is a virtuous action as a fact that by itself provides a reason to perform that action.

This I take to be the standard way of understanding what it means to choose X for itself or for its own sake. It is, in fact, the way of understanding it assumed by those who

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[14] More will be said in Chapter II about Aristotle's interchangeable use of these phrases.

[15] In making this assumption, I follow Cooper (1980, 334), Kraut (1989, ch.2), *et al.* Cf. Velleman (1999, 354-362).

endorse the first two possible solutions to be examined: Unintentional Self-Love, and Overdetermination. But as I criticize these solutions in subsequent chapters, we shall see that this sense of choosing something for itself is inadequate and cannot be what Aristotle means. Henceforth, I will refer to this sense of choosing something for itself as "the standard" sense, or meaning.

2. The Possible Solutions

Below I discuss the possible solutions to the problem for each case and which solution I believe should be attributed to Aristotle. In essence, there are three possible solutions that promise to resolve *both* the conceptual *and* moral difficulties. The first solution claims that Aristotle's view is that the virtuous agent is not motivated at all by his own happiness. The second solution appeals to motivational overdetermination and counterfactuals. The third solution claims that the two motives converge into a single motive, such that something is chosen for its own sake just in so far as it is chosen for the sake of an independent end.

2.1. Unintentional Self-Love

The first solution, which I call 'unintentional self-love', solves the problem by denying that Aristotle's virtuous agent aims at his own happiness.[16] If this is true, then quite clearly there are no conceptual or moral difficulties with which to contend. This strategy has been employed in some subtly different ways, with the following interpretive claims having been advanced:

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[16] This view is defended by Julia Annas (1977 and 1988) and Jennifer Whiting (2006).

1) Whenever Aristotle seems to endorse self-regarding motives, he's merely saying that some people tend to be motivated in that way as a matter of psychological fact. He is *not* (they claim) endorsing those motives, and his view is that the genuine, virtuous friend, aims at the good of his friend for the friend's sake and for no other reason.[17]

2) According to Aristotle, one's own *eudaimonia* can only be achieved if one is not consciously aiming at it; it can only be achieved if one chooses the well-being of friends, and virtuous actions, for their own sakes and for no other reason.[18] And so, for this reason, self-love (according to Aristotle) causes the agent to eventually develop a disposition to value virtue and friends purely for their own sakes. In this way self-love is said to explain what the agent does without motivating the agent.

3) Because by helping a friend and by being virtuous the agent does attain something good for himself, he can be said to act for the sake of his own happiness from an outside perspective. It is only in this third-person-perspective sense that he acts for the sake of his own happiness.[19]

Each of these claims has been made in both the case of friendship and the case of virtue and happiness.

This is the first possible solution that will be taken up in Chapter II with respect to friendship, and in Chapter IV with respect to virtue and happiness. I argue that this solution to the problem, in both cases, cannot withstand close textual scrutiny and therefore must not be attributed to Aristotle. Certain passages clearly imply that the

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[17] Annas (1988, 2) and Whiting (2006, 292).

[18] Whiting (2002). This is similar to the sophisticated consequentialist position according to which someone will do a better job of maximizing utility if he develops dispositions to not try to maximize utility. See also Homiak (1981, 640 & 650) and Kraut (1989, 137-138).

[19] Annas (1988) and Whiting (2002 and 2006). Someone who should be mentioned in this context is Broadie (1991, 31-2). She argues that *eudaimonia* functions as a side constraint on virtuous activity. She thinks that the agent, the vast majority of the time, does not deliberate with a view to a "grand end" like *eudaimonia* on the grounds that such a thing would be extremely unlikely. *Eudaimonia* only enters the deliberative process of the agent, she thinks, when a possible course of action is seen to be obviously at odds with the promotion of *eudaimonia.* See Kraut (1995) for a rebuttal of Broadie's view.

agent aims at (i.e. is motivated by) his own happiness in both the case of friendship and of virtue.

2.2. Overdetermination

This solution appeals to counterfactuals and claims that actions on behalf of one's friend and virtuous actions are, according to Aristotle, motivationally overdetermined. That is, these actions are caused by more than one motive, two motives in this case, and the solution views those motives as arising from two *independent* reasons for action. Virtue and friendship have value in themselves, and they also have value for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia,* and these two kinds of value are independent of each other.[20] Another way of putting this is simply that the overdetermination solution assumes the standard meaning of what it is to value something for itself.

Here is a formal grid for understanding how the overdetermination solution works. First, our two motives are:

> **M1)** The motive to choose X for itself (where X equals either virtue or the good of one's friend).
>
> **M2)** The motive to choose X for the sake of Y (where Y equals one's own happiness).

Here are the possible scenarios regarding the counterfactuals.

1) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while M1 would be sufficient for action in the absence of M2 (but M2 would be insufficient for action in the absence of M1).[21]

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[20] Defenders of this view include Gottlieb (2009, 140-142) and Kraut (1989, 137-139), though neither goes into great detail about the counterfactuals.

[21] Kenny (1965-6, 28) argues that what Aristotle means by the claim that virtue is chosen both for its own sake and for the sake of happiness is that it is desired on some occasions just for the sake of happiness, and on other occasions just for its own sake. So he thinks that sometimes the agent acts purely from M1, and sometimes purely from M2. I think this view ought to be avoided for at least the following reasons:

2) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while M2 would be sufficient for action in the absence of M1 (but M1 would be insufficient for action in the absence of M2).

3) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while *either* M1 *or* M2 would be sufficient for action in the absence of the other.

4) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while either M1 or M2 alone, in the absence of the other, would be *insufficient* for action.

In subsequent chapters, I shall argue that each of each of 1-4 is able to resolve the conceptual difficulty, but that only 1) and 3) stand a chance of resolving the moral difficulty. But whether any of 1-4 can be attributed to Aristotle is a different question. Aristotle does himself say at *NE* 1097b1-5 that we would choose virtue even if nothing followed from it, which would seem to suggest that he has something like overdetermination in mind.[22] I argue, however, that both in the case of friendship and in the case of virtue and happiness, the overdetermination solution cannot be squared with Aristotle's text and ought not to be attributed to him in any of its forms. In order for the overdetermination solution to work, I argue, it has to be the case that there are some occasions on which Aristotle thinks that the agent chooses virtue or the good of his friend even though he has nothing to gain eudaimonically by doing so. I argue that textual evidence shows that Aristotle does not envision any cases like this, and that it is his view that when one acts virtuously or on behalf of one's friend, it is impossible *not* to derive some eudaimonic benefit from it.[23] Counterfactuals, therefore, turn out to be rather

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Aristotle claims that choosing the virtuous action for its own sake is necessary for being virtuous. He therefore could not mean to say that the virtuous often do not choose virtuous actions for their own sakes.

[22] Gottlieb (2009, 140) relies heavily on this claim and argues that we should take it "at face value".

[23] This is consistent with it being Aristotle's view that there are some cases such that refraining from performing some virtuous action might be more in one's self-interest than performing it. This may be true

uninformative for Aristotle. And the fact that he does not envision any cases like the ones just mentioned strongly suggests that he thinks that the two motives converge, as per the third solution.

Before discussing the third solution, I must emphasize that both Unintentional Self-Love and Overdetermination assume the standard meaning of choosing something for itself. They both consider the value that virtue and friends have *in themselves* to be value that they have independently of how they contribute to the agent's *eudaimonia.*

2.3. The Constitutive Solution

According to the third solution, which I call "The Constitutive Solution", X is chosen both for itself and for the sake of Y in so far as X is chosen as an essential constituent part of Y. Those who defend this solution argue that, according to Aristotle, in friendship based on character my friend's good becomes a constituent of my own good.[24] They go on to argue that valuing a friend as a constituent of one's own good, contrasted with valuing a friend as a means, is consistent with valuing a friend for his own sake.

This solution is promising for both cases, for it adequately countenances what I argue is a key Aristotelian thesis: To value X for itself, or for its own sake, is to value X for those features of X that make X what it is. To put it simply – to value X for itself is to

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of some extreme cases of self-sacrifice that Aristotle discusses. My claim is that even in those cases of self-sacrifice, there is a eudaimonic benefit for the agent who sacrifices himself and that he makes the sacrifice partly on this basis. Although it could even be Aristotle's view that in the cases of extreme self-sacrifice in which one gives up his life for a friend or for the *polis*, the agent does what is all-options-considered best for himself. This may be implied by Aristotle's remark at *NE* IX.8 1169a22 when he explains why the agent makes such sacrifices: "For he would choose to enjoy himself intensely for a brief while rather than slightly for a long time." He also tells us at 1169a18 that "every *nous* chooses what is best for itself."

[24] So, Brink (1997, 132; 145-8), Milgram (1987, 375), Politis (1993, 158), and Irwin (1988, 391-7).

value X for what X is essentially. This is importantly different from the standard meaning of valuing something for itself. Consider this analogy: On Aristotle's view, a hand would not be a hand if detached from a body. Since a hand is *essentially* part of a body, since what it is to be a hand is to be a part of a body, to care for one's hand for itself – *for what it is* – is just to care for it insofar as it is a part of a body. So to aim at the good of one's hand is, *ipso facto,* to aim at the good of one's body (not merely from a third person perspective). While a person could care for his hand under some other guise (someone with a strange sort of hand-fetish might care for his hand *qua* beautiful aesthetic appendage), in Aristotle's language, such a person would not be caring for his hand *insofar as it is a hand.* Such a person would therefore not be caring for his hand for itself – for what it is. What the hand analogy shows is that the only way to care for a hand for its own sake, *for what it essentially is,* is to care for it insofar as it is a part of a body, for that is what the hand essentially is. And so, the only way to value a friend for himself is to value him as an essential constituent part of one's own *eudaimonia*, and the only way to value virtue for itself is to value it as an essential constituent part of one's own *eudaimonia*.

I argue that both in the case of friendship and in the case of virtue and happiness, the constitutive view is Aristotle's view, as it is well supported textually and certainly more so than the previous two solutions. But in the case of friendship, the way in which the constitutive solution explains how the motives converge commits Aristotle to what appears to be a morally objectionable view about what friends are, or at least to what the well-being of a friend is. The hand analogy seems ill-equipped to deal properly with friendship - for while my friend's *eudaimonia* may happen to be a part of my own,

presumably this is *not* what my friend's *eudaimonia* is essentially. Even if his good were detached from its constitutive relation to mine, he would still be who he is, presumably; he would still be a separate being unto himself. It would not be like the hand case, where the hand literally loses its essence – literally ceases to be – once it is detached from the body. On the constitutive solution, it seems, friends do not have a proper regard for each other insofar as they do not recognize that each of them has a "separate good".

But as important as those reservations are, Aristotle's view is that they are misguided. It is his view, in fact, that in the ideal kind of friendship, friends and their respective well-beings *are* essentially intertwined in the way that the constitutive solution requires. Once we see how Aristotle develops this view, we see why there is nothing morally objectionable about it. Or, at the very least, we see why he himself thought that the moral objection could be overcome. Aristotle claims that true friends are a single soul (μία ψυχή).[25] This view is inchoate in *NE* IX.7, and comes to fruition in IX.9 and IX.12. IX.7 grounds the thesis that friends essentially are what they have shaped each other to be.[26] IX.9 grounds the thesis that to be aware of oneself is to be aware of one's friend (συναισθάνεσθαι) and vice versa. In Chapter III, I develop Aristotle's view that friends are a single soul.[27] This solves the problem of motivation by telling a compelling

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[25] He speaks of friends as a single soul in the *Eudemian Ethics* 1240a36-1240b9, and at *NE* IX.8 1168b7. As well, Diogenes Laertius reports of Aristotle that: "To the query, 'What is a friend?' his reply was, 'A single soul dwelling in two bodies'" (D.L. 5.20). This is a provocative idea, and one bound to strike us modern readers as obscure and metaphorical at best, plainly false at worst. After all, friendship by definition is between two distinct individuals. Yet the idea is one that Aristotle endorses. Diogenes' testimony shows something important, for it shows that Aristotle did not lose sight of the obvious – namely, that friends are numerically distinct ('*two bodies*'). Yet he doesn't think that this precludes there being the unity of friends that he envisages.

[26] The argument of 1168a1-10 supports this claim.

[27] In order for this view to be convincing, I have to show that it is robust enough to solve the problem of motivation, but weak enough to countenance numerical distinctness between friends. Surely any view that

story about how, through a friendship, the character and well-being of each friend is essentially shaped by, and defined by reference to, the other. It therefore can be thought of as providing a much needed foundation for the constitutive solution. However, it also goes beyond the constitutive solution. To the extent that friends are a unity, the unity prevents a distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding motives with respect to the friends themselves in relation to each other. To the extent that friends are a single soul, it is not the case that I act on behalf of my friend, or that he acts on behalf of me. Rather, it is the single soul that acts on behalf of itself.

In Chapter IV I examine the case of virtue and happiness. I argue that the constitutive solution solves the problem, and with greater ease than in the case of friendship. Just as in the case of friendship, the unintentional self-love and overdetermination solutions are found to be inadequate, as is the standard meaning of choosing something for itself. I argue that, for Aristotle, to choose a virtuous action *for itself* is to choose it for those features of it that make it a virtuous action. And an essential feature of any virtuous action is that it actualizes the agent's capacity for virtue, which is that in which his *eudaimonia* primarily consists. For Aristotle, ἠθικὴ ἀρετή *just is, essentially,* what makes for a good functioning human being, and good functioning is *eudaimonia* (*NE* I.7 1098a3-15). To speak of virtue as detached from this role is to speak not of virtue, but of something else. The hand analogy carries over perfectly. And so an agent who chooses virtue for its own sake *and* as a constituent part of his own happiness is not guilty of any sort of conceptual confusion, for virtue is chosen for its own sake

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denies numerical distinctness between two individual human beings cannot be accepted. But there is, I claim, an important kind of distinctness between friends that Aristotle's view *does* deny.

exactly insofar as it is chosen as something essentially constitutive of his own happiness.[28]

However, a question remains regarding whether the constitutive solution creates a morally unattractive picture of the agent. This is because some of the virtues of character (but not all) would appear to aim at benefiting others, virtues like generosity, justice, and courage. The constitutive solution might make it seem that the agent benefits others purely as a way of actualizing his own capacities for virtue. I argue, however, that the constitutive solution need not have this implication. This is because *some* virtuous actions have essential features that refer plainly to the good of other people, like just actions for instance. Therefore, the agent may choose to perform, say, a just action *both* because it actualizes his capacity for virtue *and* because it benefits others in the right way, *without* thinking that benefiting others is just a way of actualizing his own capacities.[29] And in so choosing to perform it, he chooses it for itself. But as I argue for this, I also want to stress that the agent is always entitled to have – indeed *ought* to have – the self-regarding motive as well, for a virtuous action by nature is an action that actualizes his essentially human capacities and so benefits him eudaimonically.

My approach will be to first deal with the problem of motivation as it arises in friendship, and then with the problem of choosing virtue both for itself and for the sake of happiness. In Chapter II, I will apply the three possible solutions to the case of friendship and show why they all fail, or leave us with a morally unattractive agent (as in the constitutive solution). In Chapter III, I will argue that Aristotle solves the problem of

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[28] Therefore, to say that the agent chooses virtue for its own sake or that he chooses it for the sake of his own *eudaimonia* are just two ways of describing the same choice (or the same action).

[29] In the eyes of some, this will not get the agent entirely off the hook. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV section 5.2.

motivation in the case of friendship with his view that friends are a single soul. In Chapter IV, I will address the problem concerning virtue and happiness, once again go through each of the three possible solutions, and argue that the constitutive solution succeeds. I conclude the dissertation in Chapter V by summing up the findings and discussing how they might lead to future research.

3. Caveats and Clarifications

Before continuing to the next chapter, there are some points that need to be addressed briefly in order to clear away any possible confusion moving forward. In order, they are: 1) Distinguishing the problem of motivation from other closely related but different problems that will not be addressed in the dissertation; 2) Whether Aristotle endorses 'the eudaimonist axiom'; 3) Whether Aristotle thinks that *eudaimonia* is contemplation alone, or a whole of which contemplation is merely a part; and 4) Aristotle's claim that the virtuous agent acts for the sake of the noble (τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα).

3.1. Different But Closely Related Problems

The problem of motivation bears similarity to other perennial problems of interpreting Aristotle, so it will be useful to identify those problems and distinguish them from the problem of motivation in order to avoid confusion. The first problem we ought to identify is that of convincing the moral skeptic that it pays to be good.[30] If the ethical life is as good as Aristotle claims it to be, we might think that he has a solution to this

[30] For a full and rich treatment of whether Aristotle has a solution to this problem, see Lännström (2006, 1-4 and 71-97).

problem.[31] And related to this, we might look to Aristotle for an answer to the question of whether ethics can in some deep sense be *justified;* whether there is a good answer to the question 'Why be moral?' Some, like H.A. Prichard who famously accused moral philosophy of resting on a mistake, think that the very question is nonsensical.[32] Thomas Nagel, for instance, has claimed that any justification of ethics "must rest on empirical assumptions about the influences to which people are susceptible. The justification will have neither validity nor persuasive force if those assumptions are not true of the individual to whom it is addressed."[33] Some philosophers have tried to bring Aristotle's ethics to bear on this debate, and show that the 'Why be moral?' question *is* a real and important question, and that Aristotle *does* have a good answer to it. He justifies his ethics by deriving it from certain psychological and metaphysical facts about human nature. Psychologically, we all seek happiness. Metaphysically, there is a human

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[31] Henry Sidgwick concludes in *The Method of Ethics* that "a harmony between the maxim of Prudence and the maxim of Rational Benevolence must be somehow demonstrated, if morality is to be made completely rational" (1874, 499). Aristotelian virtues like generosity, friendliness, and justice, seem to be oriented toward the good of other people, and so toward benevolence. If Aristotle can show that having these virtues makes one flourish, then perhaps he can make morality "completely rational" as Sidgwick requires. Surely Aristotle must have been aware of this problem, as it figures most prominently in Plato's *Republic.* Here I tend to agree with those who think that Aristotle was not very much concerned with convincing someone like Thrasymachus, given how he restricts his audience to those who have had the benefit of a proper upbringing. Such individuals, because they are already oriented toward the good, are the only ones, in Aristotle's view, with the capacity to gain anything from listening to lectures on ethics. Argument, according to Aristotle, will have no effect on those who are already oriented toward what is base (*NE* I.3 1095a2-11; I.4 1095b5-10; X.9 1179b24-30). See McDowell (1995). Insofar as he does have a solution to the problem, it is strikingly similar to Plato's – a solution according to which 1) *Eudaimonia* is a matter of having a well-ordered and functioning soul; 2) Vice necessarily makes for a malfunctioned and corrupt soul; and 3) The cultivation of an ethical life of virtue is necessary for having a well-ordered and good functioning soul. The function argument of *NE* I.7 1097b22-1098a21 seems to proceed in this way.

[32] Prichard (1912).

[33] Nagel (1978, 3-4).

function. We ought to be virtuous because, given the human entelechy, being virtuous is how we realize our uniquely human capacities and achieve happiness.[34]

Related to the previous theme, some have raised the question of whether Aristotle's ethics is egoistic in some fundamental sense, which it would seem to be if achieving one's own *eudaimonia* is one's ultimate ethical goal. Much ink has been spilled over this question, with some lamenting Aristotle's egoism, others applauding it, and others proudly proclaiming that there is no need to read him as an egoist of any kind.[35] And still there are others who, while not going as far as to declare Aristotle a full-fledged ethical egoist, look to his ethics for an alternative to modern ethics because of the place that it gives to self-interest. As one philosopher puts it, "what is interesting about eudaimonism, I have always thought, is that it plausibly represents a sophisticated kind of self-concern as the core of morality."[36]

None of these debates will be substantively addressed in this work. The main problem of this dissertation concerns the motivational structure of the virtuous agent, and in no way hinges on whether Aristotle can prove that the ethical life is necessary for achieving happiness, or on whether or not he is trying to justify ethics in some deep

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[34] So, Ross (1959, 184), Williams (1976, 56-59, 61), Irwin (1988, 468). Other philosophers think that Aristotle is not trying to derive normativity from facts in this way. For example: Annas (1993, 137), Kraut (1989, 353 n34), Nussbaum (1992, 227), Simpson (1992, 507). Annas and Nussbaum contend that the facts about human nature with which Aristotle begins are themselves normative, Kraut thinks that Aristotle derives his conception of human nature *from* his conception of the human good, and Simpson contends that the notion of virtue is conceptually and explanatorily prior to the notion of *eudaimonia*. On Simpson's view, Aristotle's point is not that we should accept his account of virtue because it will lead to *eudaimonia,* but that we should accept his account of *eudaimonia* because of the pride of place it gives to virtue.

[35] For those who criticize Aristotle for being an egoist, see Field (1921, 109), Hardie (1968, 331), Allan (1952, 138), Ross (1923, 208; 231-32). For those who think that Aristotle is an egoist and applaud it, see Gottlieb (1996). She thinks that his egoism is sufficiently sophisticated to overcome various objections. For those who think it is a misinterpretation to read Aristotle as an egoist of any sort, see Annas (1993), Kraut (1989, ch. 2), Whiting (2006), McKerlie (1998), and Morrison (2001).

[36] Schmidtz (1997, 109). Others in this vein include Rogers (1997), Hampton (1997), Brink (1997), and Badhwar (1993).

sense. It also does not depend on whether or not Aristotle should be considered an egoist of any kind.[37] What *is* required for my problem is that Aristotle holds that being virtuous in some way leads to being happy, and that the virtuous agent believes this. These claims I take to be rather uncontroversial, and they are consistent with any of the positions one might take with respect to the aforementioned debates.

3.2. The Eudaimonist Axiom

So far I have been assuming the relatively standard interpretation of Aristotle's eudaimonism, according to which Aristotle is committed to what Gregory Vlastos calls "the eudaimonist axiom".[38] This axiom states that all of one's actions are chosen, or ought to be chosen, for the sake of *eudaimonia,* where the *eudaimonia* in question is *one's own.* The problem of motivation seems to assume the eudaimonist axiom to a large extent, for there would not be much of a problem if Aristotle did not think that one should aim at one's own happiness. Some have questioned whether Aristotle marks out the agent's own happiness as the ultimate goal of all of his actions.[39] To borrow some helpful terminology from Politis 1998, the question is whether Aristotle's eudaimonism is

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[37] However, the problem of motivation is obviously related to this problem and to issues concerning egoism and altruism. To the extent that Aristotle thinks that we seek our own happiness, he might seem to be endorsing egoism of some kind, and to the extent that he thinks we seek the good of others (like friends), he might seem to be endorsing altruism. See Kraut (1989, ch.2) for a good discussion of egoism in Aristotle's ethics. Kraut distinguishes between several different kinds of egoism and argues that Aristotle does not endorse any of them. For the most part, throughout this dissertation, I will deliberately avoid using the terms 'egoism' and 'altruism'. They are loaded terms, and terms that are used too frequently in too many different ways. For the most part, I use the terms 'self-regarding' and 'other-regarding' in lieu of 'egoistic' and 'altruistic'. In any case, I am not trying to prove that Aristotle is or is not an ethical or rational egoist.

[38] Vlastos (1991, 203).

[39] See Morrison (2001); McKerlie (1998). They both interpret *NE* I.2 to mean that the ultimate goal of one's actions ought to be the *eudaimonia* of the *polis.*

agent-relative or agent-neutral, where agent-relative eudaimonism is the view that one's own happiness is the ultimate end of action, and agent-neutral eudaimonism is the view that somebody's happiness, whether oneself or another person, is the ultimate end of action.[40] If Aristotle's eudaimonism is agent-neutral and he thinks that the ultimate goal of one's actions should be the *eudaimonia* of someone else, or the general *eudaimonia,* or the *eudaimonia* of the *polis,* one might think that the problem of motivation is no longer a problem.

But the problem of motivation arises whether or not Aristotle endorses the eudaimonist axiom - whether or not his eudaimonism is agent-relative or agent-neutral. For even if he does *not* endorse the axiom and if his eudaimonism is agent-neutral, it hardly follows that Aristotle thinks that *none* of our virtuous actions aim at our own happiness.[41] All that is required for the problem of motivation to arise is that it be true that Aristotle thinks that there are times when the virtuous agent chooses virtuous actions *both* for their own sakes *and* for the sake of *his own* happiness. However, whether we

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[40] Politis (1998, 369-373) makes a convincing case that Aristotle's eudaimonism should be understood agent-relatively.

[41] When he says that we choose virtue for the sake of happiness, "supposing that through it we shall be happy" (*NE* I.7 1097b5), the 'we' is naturally read as marking out individuals aiming at their own happiness. The *Eudemian Ethics* is even more explicit: "First then about these things we must enjoin everyone that has the power to live according to his own choice to set up for himself some object for the good life to aim at (whether honor or reputation or wealth or culture), with reference to which he will then do all his acts, since not to have one's life organized in view of some end is a mark of much folly" (*EE* I.2 1214b7-11). In addition, there is a passage in Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that seldom receives discussion in this context that directly bears on the issue of whether the agent aims at his own *eudaimonia.* I am referring to VI.5, where Aristotle discusses practical wisdom (φρόνησις), the one intellectual virtue that is deeply connected to the virtues of character in that it enables the agent to discern the mean in a given situation. Wilkes (1978, 341), to her credit, makes the passage in question front and center in her discussion of *eudaimonia.* Aristotle says that what characterizes the man of practical wisdom is that he is "able to deliberate finely about things that are good and advantageous *for himself,* not in some restricted area – about what sorts of things promote health, strength, for instance – but about what sorts of things promote living well generally" (*NE* VI.5 1140a24-28; my emphasis; Here I slightly amend Irwin's translation. He uses 'prudence' for φρόνησις and 'beneficial' for συμφέροντα, while I prefer to use 'practical wisdom' and 'advantageous'.)

should understand Aristotle's eudaimonism to be agent-neutral or agent-relative will become an important question in Chapter IV section 5 when we evaluate the moral implications of the constitutive solution.

3.3. *Eudaimonia* and Contemplation

Aristotle notoriously argues in Book X of the *Ethics* that *eudaimonia* consists in theoretical contemplation alone. At least, he seems to. This has divided scholars into two camps. As Irwin notes in his commentary[42], we are forced to choose between two interpretations of Aristotle's conception of *eudaimonia*:

i) An inclusive conception: The highest good, chosen only for its own sake, is composed of the non-instrumental goods that are chosen both for their own sakes and for the sake of the highest good. To choose them for the sake of happiness is not to choose them purely as instrumental means, since the 'for the sake of' relation, as Aristotle understands it, includes the relation of part to whole. Aristotle develops the conception he introduced in I:2 when he described the end of political science as including the ends of other sciences concerned with actions.[43]

ii) An exclusive conception: Every good that is chosen both for itself and for the sake of the highest good is separate from (not a part of), and strictly instrumental to, the highest good, even though it is also chosen for its own sake, and hence not for the sake of happiness. The claim in I:2 about the inclusive character of the end of political science simply means that political science "embraces" the ends of the other sciences by using them.[44]

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[42] Irwin (1999, 181-182).

[43] Nagel (1972) thinks Aristotle is indecisive on whether he endorses an inclusivist or exclusivist view. Ackrill (1980) argues in favor of the inclusivist conception and is its most famous and cited proponent. Other supporters of the inclusivist conception include Bostock (2000, 14), Cooper (1987), Crisp (1994), Devereaux (1981), Keyt (1983 and 1989), Roche (1988), White (1990), and Whiting (1986).

[44] Supporters of the exclusivist conception include: Kraut (1989), Kenny (1965-6), Lear (2004), and Van Cleemput (2006). Broadie (1991, 31-2) is a notable exception who takes neither position. She argues instead that *eudaimonia* functions as a side constraint on virtuous activity.

To say that the literature on this interpretive problem is vast would be an understatement. I mention it here because the constitutive solution applied to virtue and happiness, which I argue succeeds, clearly assumes inclusivism to a large extent. Since virtue is a part of happiness according to inclusivism, it is the sort of thing that can be chosen as such. But if the exclusive conception is right, then virtue is an instrumental means to contemplation and cannot be chosen as a constituent part of it.[45] Unfortunately I cannot enter substantively into this debate in this work. I assume throughout that Aristotle's conception of *eudaimonia* is inclusive so as to contain contemplation but as to not be identified solely with it, though I am aware that this is controversial.

3.4. Acting For the Sake of the Noble

Finally, the last point to address concerns Aristotle's remark that the virtuous act for the sake of the noble (τὸ καλόν).[46] Aristotle never gives a substantive account of the noble as he does for his many other key concepts. His claim that the virtuous act for the sake of the noble is scattered throughout the *Ethics*.[47] The claim raises many interesting questions, and the most important for our purposes is: How is choosing a virtuous action

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[45] All of the supporters of the exclusivist conception argue that virtue of character promotes the practice of contemplation in instrumental ways. All but one – Lear (2004). She argues that virtuous actions approximate contemplative activity and are chosen both for their own sakes and for the sake of contemplation insofar as they so approximate. It is worth noting that Kraut, an exclusivist, argues that the virtuous agent has two independent reasons for choosing virtuous actions: 1) They are valuable in themselves apart from any contribution to *eudaimonia*. 2) They sustain the contemplative activities of the philosopher. It is worth noting this because exclusivism naturally favors some version of the overdetermination solution to the problem of motivation.

[46] This is a notoriously difficult word to translate. It literally means 'beautiful', but in some of the ethical contexts that Aristotle uses it, 'beautiful' is not always apt. 'Fine' and 'noble' are the most common in the literature, and I use 'noble' throughout. For a minority position, see Owens (1981, 265-69), who argues that 'right' is the best translation, and is in turn criticized by Taylor (2006, 89), Lannstrom (2006, 11-12), and Rogers (1993, 359-61). See also Allan (1971), Cooper (1999), Lear (2004, ch. 6), and Tuozzo (1995) for what Aristotle might mean by *kalon* in the *Ethics*.

[47] *NE* 1115b12, 1116b3, 1117b9, 1117b17, 1119b15, 11120a23, 1122b6-7.

for the sake of the noble related to choosing the action for its own sake and for the sake of *eudaimonia*? How does the noble figure in the problem of motivation? I will take this up again in Chapter IV, but for now the following points ought to be made.

There are passages in which Aristotle treats choosing virtuous actions δι' αὑτοῦς and choosing them τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα as basically the same. Consider the fact that Aristotle claims that if virtuous actions are not chosen for themselves, then the person choosing them is not truly virtuous (*NE* II.4 1105a32). In addition, the doctrine of the mean in II.6 states that virtue of character lies in a mean between a vice of excess and a vice of deficiency. To be in the mean state is to be disposed to have certain feelings "at the right times, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end, and in the right way," for this "is the intermediate and best condition, and this is proper to virtue" (*NE* II.4 1106b21-25). Now consider the following passages regarding the virtues of generosity and courage:

> If someone gives to the wrong people, or does not aim at the noble but gives for some other reason (ἀλλὰ διά τιν' ἄλλην αἰτίαν), he will not be called generous, but some other sort of person. (*NE* IV.1 1120a28-29)

> Human beings too, then, are distressed when angry, and take pleasure in retaliating; but people who fight from these motives are effective in fighting, not courageous, since they do not fight because of the noble, or as reason directs, but on account of passion (*NE* III.8 1117a7-9).

> Actions in accord with virtue are noble and aim at the noble. Hence the generous person will also aim at the noble in his giving, and will give correctly; *for he will give to the right people, in the right amounts, at the right time, and all the other things that are implied by correct giving.* (*NE* IV.1 1120a24-27, my emphasis)

These passages make clear that an action's status as virtuous is inextricably tied to its status as noble, and vice versa. That being the case, the motive from nobility need not be

thought of as fundamentally different from the motive to choose the virtuous action for itself.

Surprisingly, there are also passages in which the motive to choose a virtuous action for the sake of the noble does not seem fundamentally different from the motive to choose a virtuous action for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia*. In *NE* IX.8 1169a17-b3, Aristotle speaks of the noble not just as a right making feature of actions, but also as an attractive force for the agent. He speaks of it as "the greatest good" that the agent chooses for himself. It is such a precious value that the agent will do things like sacrifice large amounts of money to friends for it, and perhaps even lay down his life for it in certain extraordinary circumstances. In doing so, he actually ends up better off. Now, when Aristotle speaks of the noble in this way, he's emphasizing the eudaimonic benefits of it, and the point is that the virtuous choose certain actions for such benefits. My point is that the noble does not signify a third motive, one distinct from the motive to choose virtuous actions for their own sakes and from the motive to choose them for the sake of *eudaimonia.* Rather, in certain passages, Aristotle uses the idea of the noble to describe the one motive, and in other passages he uses the idea of the noble to describe the other motive.

At its core, then, this work attempts to answer the following two questions in the following order:

> 1) Why, according to Aristotle, does the virtuous agent love and value his friend?
>
> 2) Why, according to Aristotle, does the virtuous agent value virtuous actions?

Let us now dig deeper into Aristotle's text, beginning with the books of the *Nicomachean Ethics* on *philia,* and let us take up the proposed solutions to the problem.

II

Friendship and Self-Love

> And it is through loving their friend that they love what is good for themselves, since a good person who becomes a friend becomes a good for the person to whom he is a friend; so each of them, then, loves what is good for himself. (*NE* VIII.5 1157b33-35)

1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will take up the possible solutions to the problem of motivation in the case of friendship: Unintentional Self-Love, Overdetermination, and the Constitutive Solution. I will argue that the first two should not be attributed Aristotle. The constitutive solution, while better grounded textually than the previous solutions, is liable to an important objection, one that will be further addressed in Chapter III. Before we actually tackle the possible solutions, it will be best to first take a closer look at Aristotle's account of friendship and the passages that give rise to the problem.

Aristotle distinguishes between three types of friendship: friendship of utility, friendship of pleasure, and – his revered paradigm - friendship based on character (*NE* VIII.2, 3 & 4). What distinguishes each of these kinds of friendship is that on account of which (δια) friends care for each other in each. We might put this point by saying that what distinguishes each of these friendships is determined by the answer to the question, 'Why do you love your friend?' In friendships of utility, the answer is usefulness. In friendships of pleasure, the answer is pleasure. Aristotle explicitly makes this very point:

> So then, those who love each other on account of usefulness do not love each other in their own right, but rather in so far as something useful[48] comes to them from the other. So too those who love on account of pleasure: they love quick-witted people, not because the latter have a

[48] χρήσιμος. I depart from Pakaluk here, who uses "good" to translate this word. "Useful" is a much better rendering (thanks due to Professor Mackie for suggesting this).

> certain character, but rather because they are pleasant to them. Hence, those who love on account of usefulness, love on account of what is useful for themselves; and those who love on account of pleasure, love on account of what is pleasant to themselves – and not in so far as the beloved is [what he is] (οὐχ ᾗ ὁ φιλούμενός ἐστιν), but rather in so far as he is useful or pleasant (*NE* VIII.3 1156a10-16).

The last remark of that passage is crucial. In a friendship of pleasure or utility, a friend is not loved for "what he is", but for something else. This is why Aristotle calls these friendships "accidental": "Hence, these friendships are so by accident (κατὰ συμβεβηκός), because it is not as being the man that he is that the beloved is loved, but rather in so far as he provides something" (*NE* VIII.3 1156a16-18). This is precisely why these sorts of friendship are rather prone to dissolution (*NE* VIII.3 115618-24).

The previous points anticipate what makes friendship based on character different from, and more special than, the other kinds of friendship. In a friendship based on character, a friend *is* loved on account of "what he is". This is the friendship of the virtuous. The passage in which Aristotle makes his central claims about friendship based on character is worth quoting in full:

> The friendship of good people alike in virtue is complete, since they similarly wish good things to each other as good, and they are good in their own right. And those who wish good things to their friends for their friends' sake (ἐκείνων ἕνεκα) are friends to the greatest degree, since it is on account of themselves (δι' αὑτοῦς) that they are so disposed, and not accidentally. Their friendship, then, lasts as long as they are good, and virtue is a stable thing. Moreover, each of them is good without qualification and good for his friend: for good people are both good without qualification and beneficial to one another. And they are pleasant in the same way: for good people are both pleasant without qualification and pleasant to each other (*NE* VIII.3 1156b6-15).

What Aristotle makes clear in this passage is that, in friendships based on character, although friends are useful and pleasant to each other, that is *not* the reason for which they bestow love. Rather, they love each other independently of *these* self-regarding

things, and surely this is what he is emphasizing when he says that they love each other for themselves. When discussing friendships based on character, Aristotle uses the locutions ἐκείνων ἕνεκα and δι' αὑτοῦς (and their singular versions) interchangeably. To love someone for his sake just is to love him on account of himself, which just is to love him for what he is. And so, when Aristotle asks in VIII.7 whether we would wish for our friends to have the greatest good, namely, to become gods, he says: "If, then, we were correct in saying that a friend wishes good things to his friend for his friend's sake (ἐκείνου ἕνεκα), the friend would need to remain the sort of thing he is (οἷός ποτ' ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνος)" (1159a9-10).

Now, when Aristotle says that a friend loves his friend for what he is, he implies that what one is pertains to one's virtuous character. After all, a friend of pleasure could say, "I love my friend for what he is. He *is* pleasant." Aristotle would claim that being pleasant is an accidental quality, so the person making that claim would be guilty of equivocating. What we are pertains to our character. Good people in the best kind of friendship love each other for their sakes in the sense that they love each other because of their virtuous characters – they "wish good things to each other as good" (1156b7), and it is "in so far as they are good that they are friends" (1157b3).[49]

In answer, then, to the question 'Why do you love your friend?' the friend on account of pleasure answers 'Because my friend provides something pleasant to me,' the friend on account of utility answers 'Because my friend provides something useful to

[49] This raises a number of interesting issues that, because they are tangential to my main goals, I won't be addressing. One is whether to love someone for his virtuous character really is to love him *for himself.* The thought here is that what the lover loves is actually just virtue as such, not the friend who has virtue. For discussions of this problem, see Vlastos (1973), Stern-Gillet (1995, 73-75), and Whiting (1991). Stern-Gillet argues, plausibly I think, that the history of shared activity that lies at the foundation of a friendship makes it so that friends are not replaceable by others who happen to be identical in virtue. Another interesting issue raised here is whether people with bad characters can have character-based friendships. Aristotle thinks that they cannot (*NE* VIII.4 1157a16-21).

me,' while the friend on account of character answers 'Because of what my friend essentially is – a virtuous person.' There is a clear contrast between friendship of pleasure and utility and character friendship. In the former types of friendship, I value my friend ultimately for something I wish to attain for myself.[50] Only in a friendship based on character do I love my friend *for himself.* And this feature, according to Aristotle, is the distinguishing feature of the best kind of friendship. Those who wish goods to their friends for their friends' sake are friends "to the greatest degree".

Because of this feature, and because of the way in which Aristotle contrasts such friendship with the other kinds, it is commonly thought that friendship based on character is fundamentally disinterested; disinterested in the sense that what motivates a good friend to act on behalf of his friend is strictly the good of his friend and nothing more.[51] Thus, Stern-Gillet writes: "In perfect friendship, he indicates, each partner makes the other the end of his activities as a friend, *and any benefit that he himself stands to derive*

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[50] There is a debate in the literature relevant to these points that I'm going to largely stay away from, but wish to say something about here. Cooper (1977) famously argued that even in pleasure and utility friendships, friends wish goods to each other for their friends' sakes. He claims that in a friendship based on utility, for example, although what ultimately holds the friendship together is mutual usefulness, friends are not precluded from caring for each other in the way that good friends do without thought for that usefulness. This allows for "unself-interested well wishing (εὔνοια) within the confines of an association primarily motivated by self-seeking." When Aristotle says that these friends love on account of (δια) utility, Cooper recommends that we read δια as having efficient-causal rather than final-causal force. Irwin (1999, 274) disagrees and argues for the final-causal reading of δια. Whiting (2006, 284-87), while sympathetic to Cooper, ultimately sides with Irwin, and here I must agree with her. She claims that the fact that Aristotle says that friendships based on pleasure and utility dissolve when the parties cease to find one another pleasant and useful supports Irwin's view. "For even if, as a result of the pleasure or utility I have received from my friend, I wish well to her, and seek occasion by occasion to benefit her *without* an eye to my own pleasure or utility, the fact that I would *not* continue to do so if I ceased to expect pleasure or utility from the relationship seems good reason to say that my primary goal is *my* pleasure or *my* utility" (2006, 287). The main point Aristotle is trying to make, Whiting notes, is that friends of pleasure and utility do not love their friends for what they essentially are, and this is the main point I wish to make as well. Cooper actually agrees with this point. He's only trying to show that friendships of pleasure and utility need not be loathsomely selfish, and in this respect I agree.

[51] See Rogers (1994b) for an excellent discussion of disinterestedness in friendship based on character. Others who agree with this general claim about friendship based on character being disinterested include Cooper (1977), Annas (1988), Whiting (2006), Kraut (1989, ch.2), and Irwin (1988, 389-95).

from the association is incidental to his motivation" (1995, 65; my emphasis).[52] The passages we have seen so far may seem to support this view. More importantly, the passages examined thus far would seem to support the standard meaning of valuing something for its own sake. Because Aristotle contrasts the valuing characteristic of true friends with the instrumental valuing of the other kinds of friendship, he may seem to think that "valuing a person for himself" means valuing him independently of what that person contributes to one's own good. He may seem to think that it means taking the good of the other person as something that by itself provides a reason to promote it.

But those who think that character friendship is so disinterested must be alarmed by some other remarks that Aristotle makes, as when he tells us that by loving our friends, we love what is good for ourselves (*NE* VIII.5 1157b33-35), and that "each person wishes good things to himself most of all" (*NE* VIII.7 1159a12). And these scattered remarks pale in comparison to the sustained discussions of self-love in Book IX. Several of the chapters in that book, notably 4, 7, 8, & 9, contain passages that must strike us as anathema to Aristotle's claim that we love our friends for themselves in friendships based on character. Consider the following claims made in each of those chapters:

1) Friendship to others is derived from friendship to oneself, and we love our friends because they are our "other selves" (IX.4 1166a1-34).

2) We love our friends because we love our own existing and activity (IX.7 1168a6-10).

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[52] What's interesting about Stern-Gillet is that she goes on to claim that "perfect friendship eschews justification in terms other than those of individual eudemonic autarky, or self-realization, and therefore cannot be justified in terms of the general good" (1995, 66). In spite of this justification, she wants to rid the virtuous agent of any motives having to do with it. As we shall shortly see, it is truly striking the lengths to which commentators go to try to make a reading like this plausible.

3) The virtuous person should be a self-lover, is a friend most of all to himself and so should love himself most of all, and acts on behalf of his friend because by doing so he attains the noble (τὸ καλόν) (IX.8 1168b-1169b3).

4) We need friends in order to gain self-knowledge (IX.9 1169b29-1170a4).

All of these claims potentially threaten the disinterested reading, and also make us scratch our heads when we juxtapose them to Aristotle's claim that we must love our friends for themselves. They may all be summed up by saying that the virtuous agent cares for his friend for the sake of his own *eudaimonia,* a claim which the passages in Book IX strongly support. But now we are back to our original problem: Aristotle claims that the agent cares for his friend *both* for the friend's sake *and* for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.*[53] How are we to understand the relation between these two motives in a way that is both conceptually and morally *un*problematic? Each of the three possible solutions discussed in the previous chapter has an answer to that question.

According to the unintentional self-love solution, Aristotle's view is that the virtuous agent does not aim at his own happiness when valuing and benefiting his friend. So this solution effectively obliterates the self-regarding motive in order to solve the problem. According to the overdetermination solution, Aristotle's virtuous agent is overdetermined by both motives to love and benefit his friend. And according to the constitutive solution, Aristotle's view is that the two motives converge into a single motive, such that to choose the good of one's friend for itself just is to choose it for the sake of *eudaimonia.* In what follows, I argue that the first two solutions fail. In addition, the main reasons for *why* they fail strongly indicate that Aristotle does not accept the

[53] Henceforth I will at times refer to the motive to care for a friend for his sake as the 'other-regarding motive', and the motive to care for a friend for the sake of one's own happiness as the 'self-regarding motive'.

standard meaning of valuing something for itself. The constitutive solution, which favors a different meaning, is a better option, although it too is not without problems – problems that will eventually be addressed in Chapter III.

2. Unintentional Self-Love

The best kind of friendship would seem to eschew selfishness of any kind, something Aristotle seems aware of with his requirement that we love our friends for their sakes. It is this thought that drives scholars who defend unintentional self-love.[54] Whenever it seems that Aristotle claims that we love our friends for the sake of our own *eudaimonia,* these scholars effectively explain the claim away. According to this view, Aristotle's ultimate position is that while it is true that we do advance our own *eudaimonia* when we love and benefit our friends, advancing our own *eudaimonia* is *not* our motive and aim.[55] Rather, our motive and aim is just to act for our friends' sakes. If unintentional self-love is true, then we need not worry about the conceptual and moral difficulties generated by the problem of motivation. If Aristotle's view is that when we value and benefit our friends we are not motivated by self-regarding reasons at all, then there is no problem.

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[54] I take the views of Annas (1977 & 1988) and Whiting (2006) to be paradigm cases of this strategy, and focus mostly on them. Other supporters of something like this view include Cooper (1977), Homiak (1981, 640), Nussbaum (1986, 355), and McKerlie (1998, 546). See also Stern-Gillet (1995, 65): "In perfect friendship, he [Aristotle] indicates, each partner makes the other the end of his activities as a friend, and any benefit that he himself stands to derive from the association is incidental to his motivation."

[55] A representative quote from Whiting: "The idea that I should wish-well-to-another-for-*her*-sake *qua* form of my *own* self-realization – or *because* doing so is a component of *my eudaimonia* – is not only morally but also conceptually problematic. For to the extent that I do what I do *qua* form of self-realization, it seems that I fail to do it *for itself.* And I take Aristotle's requirement that we choose virtuous actions *for themselves,* along with his requirement that we wish our friends well for *their* sakes, to be incompatible with the view that our primary reason for engaging in such activities is that doing so is a form of self-realization" (Whiting 2006, 197).

Of course, the main obstacle this strategy faces are the many passages in which Aristotle seems to say or imply that the virtuous agent cares for his friend for self-regarding reasons. In response to those passages, one or another of the following interpretative claims have been advanced by those who defend unintentional self-love:

> C1) Whenever Aristotle seems to endorse self-regarding motives, he's merely saying that some people tend to be motivated in that way as a matter of psychological fact. He is *not* (they claim) endorsing those motives, and his view is that the genuine, virtuous friend, aims at the good of his friend for the friend's sake and for no other reason.[56]
>
> C2) According to Aristotle, one's own *eudaimonia* can only be achieved if one is not consciously aiming at it; it can only be achieved if one chooses the well-being of friends, and virtuous actions, for their own sakes and for no other reason.[57] And so, for this reason, self-love (according to Aristotle) causes the agent to eventually develop a disposition to value virtue and friends purely for their own sakes. In this way self-love is said to explain what the agent does without motivating the agent.
>
> C3) Because by helping a friend and by generally being virtuous the agent does attain something good for himself, he can be said to act for the sake of his own happiness from an outside perspective. It is only in this third-person-perspective sense that he acts for the sake of his own happiness.[58]

A word on each of these claims is in order before moving forward. The main problem that C1) faces is that there are times when Aristotle seems to say that *the virtuous person* acts from self-regarding motives. Clearly Aristotle would not ascribe a motive to the virtuous person but at the same time not endorse that motive. So for these passages, commentators who defend unintentional self-love either try to argue that Aristotle is *not*

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[56] Annas (1988, 2) and Whiting (2006, 292).

[57] Whiting (2002). This is similar to the sophisticated consequentialist position according to which someone will do a better job of maximizing utility if he develops dispositions to not try to maximize utility. See also Homiak (1981, 640 & 650) and Kraut (1989, 137-138).

[58] Annas (1988) and Whiting (2002 and 2006).

claiming whatsoever that any agent is motivated by self-love to benefit his friends, or they opt for one of C2) or C3). C2) is the claim that Aristotle thinks that *the only way to achieve* one's own *eudaimonia* is to not aim at it. C3) only need be entertained if any of C1-2 is true. It is a claim commentators who defend unintentional self-love have resorted to in an effort to reconcile their interpretation with Aristotle's eudaimonism.

Let us now examine the passages from Book IX in which Aristotle seems to endorse the self-regarding motive. I will argue that in those passages he is, in fact, committed to the claim that the virtuous agent aims at his own *eudaimonia* when he values and acts on behalf of his friend. The claims of the unintentional self-love strategy cannot be squared with those passages.

2.1. From Friendship to Oneself to Friendship to Others

"The characteristics of friendship seem to have come (ἐληλυθέναι) from those directed at oneself," says Aristotle at the start of IX.4. Precisely what he means by this, and exactly what philosophical work he intends this claim to do, is what we must determine, for it is a provocative but unclear claim. As for those characteristics – a friend is taken to be (1) someone who wishes and does good things, or what appear to be good things, to his friend for the friend's own sake; or (2) one who wishes that his friend exist and live for his own sake… (3) Others take a friend to be one who spends time with his friend, and (4) makes the same choices as his friend; or (5) one who shares in the sorrows and joys of his friend (*NE* IX.4, 1166a4-9). And immediately after listing these characteristics, Aristotle makes the point that "each of these belongs to a good person in relation to himself" and explains the sense in which this is true. Desiring the same things

with his entire soul, the good person wishes good things for himself and acts for himself (for the sake of his *nous,* since this is what a person truly is). He also wishes to live and loves his own existence, "since existing is good for any good person, and each wishes good things for himself." Such a person also delights in spending time alone with himself, and shares especially in his own sorrows and joys, "since the same thing is painful or pleasant for him at all times, and not different things at different times, since he is without regrets, so to speak" (*NE* IX.4, 1166a114-29).

After noting how the features of friendship are found in the virtuous person's relation to himself, Aristotle concludes:

> Hence, because each of these belongs to a good person in relation to himself, and he is related to his friend as he is to himself – for a friend is another self (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός) – friendship is thought to be one or other of these, and friends those to whom these things belong (*NE* IX.4 1166a30-4).

This marks the end of the first half of IX.4. The topic then changes, as Aristotle goes on to discuss whether the vicious person can be a friend to himself. The first half of IX.4 culminates in the above passage. How are we to understand it? Aristotle may be endorsing one of the following three theses:[59]

(i) The characteristics of friendship shown towards others are psychologically derived from those shown toward oneself.

(ii) The characteristics used to define friendship have been taken from those displayed by a person in relation to himself.

(iii) The relationship of friend to friend (in character-friendship) is similar to that of a good person in relation to himself.

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[59] I take the following from Pakaluk (1998, 165).

(i) is a causal or psychological claim, according to which the psychological origins of friendship grow out of a temporally prior self-love.[60] (ii) is a logical remark about the dependence of definitions according to which we should define friendship in a way that depends upon a correct account of self-love. (iii) is the observation of a similarity between friendship and self-love. It is the claim that friendship and self-love are isomorphic.[61]

(iii) has by far been the more favored thesis by commentators.[62] Kraut, for instance, claims that "friendship towards others 'comes from' self-love in the sense that the latter provides the paradigm case of the attitudes characteristic of the former."[63] Annas, as well, thinks that (iii) is the only thesis for which Aristotle intends to argue, and she thinks that (i) is explicitly ruled out:

> Clearly Aristotle is not here deriving friendship from self-love, or giving us an argument with self-love in the premises and friendship to another in the conclusion. If he were, then the crucial point, that a friend is another self, would be simply begging the question. Rather, Aristotle is explaining friendship in terms of relations that are clearest in the case of self-love, but without reducing the former to the latter in any way (Annas 1988, 1-2).

On Annas' interpretation, friendship involves wanting something for X purely for X's sake, where X is another person. Aristotle points out that the most basic, paradigm case of wanting something for X purely for X's sake is found in one's own case. The importance of the idea that a friend is 'another self', according to Annas, is that "I can, in

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[60] See Pangle (2003, 228 n2).

[61] See Pakaluk (1998, 166).

[62] I won't have anything to say about whether IX.4 contains an argument for (ii), as nothing particularly crucial hinges on that for my purposes. What is important is that IX.4 contains an argument for (i). Theses (i) – (iii) are not mutually exclusive. IX.4 could contain arguments for all three without being inconsistent in any respect.

[63] Kraut (1989, 132). See also Pangle (2003, 228 n2), Kahn (1981, 22-23), and McKerlie (1991, 90-91). Pakaluk (1998, 166) also claims that the argument of IX.4 only supports (iii).

fact, come to regard my friend in the way I regard myself. This need import no absurdities about thinking of his pains as if they were my pains;[64] what is meant in the context is clearly regarding his *desires,* and their fulfillment, as I do my desires and their fulfillment – that is, attaching as much importance to them, making as great efforts to fulfill them, and so on" (1977, 542).[65] On Annas' view, to regard my friend as my other self is to regard his welfare *as I do* my own, not *as* my own. She acknowledges that Aristotle does not argue for this claim. Rather, he "regards it as simply a fact to be taken for granted that people can in fact come to like others and regard their interests as they do their own" (1977, 543). Nonetheless, she claims, a philosophical analysis is required which gives this fact its proper place, and Aristotle has provided such an analysis (she thinks) with his analogy to self-love, i.e. by establishing self-love as a paradigm case of wanting X for X's sake. But the key point on this account is that self-love is one case of wanting good things for someone for his sake, and friendship is another case of the same kind of wanting. There is no further connection between the two.

This interpretation of IX.4 is crucial for those who adopt the unintentional self-love strategy for the following reason: If to regard my friend as my other self is just to extend the same care to him as I extend to myself, then my motivation for helping him need not make any reference to me or my own interests. Whereas if to regard him as my other self is to think of him as *me* in some way, I might rightly be accused of some sort of

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[64] On the contrary - "For a friend wishes most of all that he might not only feel pain when his friend is in pain but feel actually the same pain—for example when he is thirsty, share his thirst—if this were possible, and if not, as nearly the same as may be" (*EE* 1240a36-9).

[65] Cf. McKerlie (1998, 546): "Aristotle does not claim that because of the friendship the friend's good has become part of my own good, or that the friendship has created a good that is shared between us. He says that in this kind of friendship I have concern for the friend's good that is like the concern I have for my own good. My good and the friend's good remain distinct. Aristotle does not assume that my ultimate concern is with my own good and then try to show that at some deep level in friendship self-concern can expand to include another person."

narcissism. If Aristotle endorses thesis (i), then he is saying that what motivates me to care for my friend is the fact that I care for myself. What we must note about the argument of IX.4 is that Aristotle is clearly talking about the virtuous agent, and not just any agent. This is important, because it means that C1) of the unintentional self-love strategy cannot be utilized. So those who adopt the unintentional self-love strategy need to interpret IX.4 in such a way that Aristotle *is not* claiming that self-love motivates the agent to value his friend. And this is precisely what they try to do.

But the interpretation favored by Annas and others, according to which Aristotle only argues for thesis (iii), cannot withstand close textual scrutiny. In fact, Aristotle does argue for (i). He begins with a list of certain features at least some of which he believes to be characteristic of friendship. The main question of the first half of IX.4 is: *What makes these features the correct ones?* What make these features the correct ones are (1) the fact that the virtuous person has them in relation to himself, and (2) the fact that he is related to his friend just as he is related to himself (since his friend is his other self). So, take the first characteristic of friendship: wishing goods to another for that person's sake. Imagine John and Sally, and assume they are both virtuous and friends. In order to be a friend to Sally, John must wish good things to her for her sake. What makes this true? What *justifies* this requirement? What makes this true – what justifies this requirement – is that John wishes good things to himself, and is related to Sally just as he is related to himself, since Sally is his other self. Aristotle is not *merely* saying that friendship with others is like friendship with oneself. He *is* saying that, but he is also *deriving* friendship with others from friendship with oneself. John is a friend to Sally *because* he is a friend

to himself and Sally is his other self. The idea is that we are able to extend a certain kind of concern to our friends *because* we regard them as something of ourselves.

A close look at the Greek of 1166a29-34 shows that (i) is the thesis for which Aristotle argues:

> τῷ δὴ πρὸς αὑτὸν ἕκαστα τούτων ὑπάρχειν τῷ ἐπιεικεῖ, πρὸς δὲ τὸν φίλον ἔχειν ὥσπερ πρὸς αὑτόν (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός), καὶ ἡ φιλία τούτων εἶναι τι δοκεῖ, καὶ φίλοι οἷς ταῦθ' ὑπάρκει.
>
> Hence, because each of these belongs to a good person in relation to himself, and he is related to his friend as he is to himself – for a friend is another self – friendship is thought to be one or other of these, and friends those to whom these things belong.

Two points must be made. The first is that the τῷ at the very beginning indicates that ὑπάρχειν and ἔχειν are articular infinitives, and that the use of the dative case must be a dative of means. So, an awkwardly literal translation might go, "By means of each of these characteristics belonging to the good person in relation to himself, and by means of relating to his friend just as he relates to himself (since a friend is another self), it is thought that friendship is some of these characteristics, and friends those to whom these characteristics belong." This strongly suggests that a causal claim is being made here.[66]

The second point that must be made concerns the use of *gar* in ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός. *Gar* is used to introduce a reason, which is why I think that the other-self claim is doing a great deal of explanatory work, work for which Annas' interpretation cannot properly account. *Pace* Annas, there *is* an argument here with self-love in the premises and friendship in the conclusion, and it looks like this:

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[66] It is interesting that when Annas treats this passage, she quotes only lines 30-32, ignoring the force of the articular infinitives. She has: "Each of these seems to belong to the good person by virtue of his relation to himself, and he relates to his friend as he does to himself, for the friend is another self" (1988, 1). Put simply in that way, it does look like a mere analogy.

> 1. Each of the features of friendship belongs to the good person in relation to himself. (τῷ δὴ πρὸς αὑτὸν ἕκαστα τούτων ὑπάρχειν τῷ ἐπιεικεῖ)
>
> 2. The good person is related to his friend just as he is related to himself. (πρὸς δὲ τὸν φίλον ἔχειν ὥσπερ πρὸς αὑτόν)
>
> > 2a. (Premise in support of 2). A friend is another self. (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός)
>
> 3. Conclusion: The features of friendship under consideration are the correct ones, and those to whom these features belong are friends. (καὶ ἡ φιλία τούτων εἶναι τι δοκεῖ, καὶ φίλοι οἷς ταῦθ' ὑπάρκει)

In short, the Greek suggests that there is an argument being made here with self-love in the premises and friendship in the conclusion, and that the other-self claim is a premise that *explains why the second main premise is true.* If Aristotle only asserts thesis (iii) in IX.4, then the other-self claim must be understood to be only another way of saying *that* the good person is related to his friend just as he is related to himself, rather than explaining that relation. The other-self claim merely states the possibility that I can come to have the same relation to my friend as I do to myself, if Aristotle only asserts (iii). But as it has been shown, the other-self claim is doing more than this.[67] While Aristotle does consider it a fact that the concern that the virtuous agent has for his friend is just like the concern he has for himself, his claim that a friend is an "other self" is not just another way of stating this fact. Rather, Aristotle uses the "other self" claim to *explain* this fact. There *is* a connection between self-love and friendship, and that there is such a connection is indicated by the other-self claim. John loves himself, and because Sally is his other self, he loves Sally. This may be problematic for other reasons, but it is at least somewhat informative. Annas can only say: John loves himself, and he loves Sally. That

[67] Cf. Benson (1990, 55).

Sally is his other self does not explain why he loves her, but is only another way of saying *that* he loves her.[68]

To sum up: Aristotle argues for thesis (i) in IX.4, and so C1) cannot be utilized by those who defend unintentional self-love. As for C2): IX.4 has the implication that an agent is caused to value his friend by the fact that his friend is his other self. C2) claims that this leads the agent to develop a disposition to value his friend only for the friend's sake and furthermore that this is the only way to advance one's own *eudaimonia* (i.e. to value one's friend only for the friend's sake). IX.4 simply contains no evidence that Aristotle thinks that C2) is true. For that matter, it also does not contain any evidence in support of C3). But that alone does not spell defeat for unintentional self-love, for other passages may be more telling – which brings us to IX.7.

2.2. Benefactors and Beneficiaries

In IX.7, Aristotle seeks to explain the seemingly odd fact that benefactors love their beneficiaries more than their beneficiaries love them. Some seek to explain this phenomenon by likening benefactors and beneficiaries to creditors and debtors: "…when loans are made, debtors wish that their creditors did not exist, but lenders go so far as to provide for the safety of people indebted to them, so too benefactors wish their beneficiaries to exist with the intent of gleaning favors, whereas the latter have no concern with making repayment" (*NE* 1167b21-25).

But Aristotle rejects the creditor-debtor paradigm as an explanation of the phenomenon. The cause, he says, would seem to be "more natural" (φυσικώτερον). The

[68] It should also be noted that Aristotle thinks that self-love is required for loving someone else. This is why the vicious person cannot be a friend to anyone else – because he does not love himself (*NE* IX.4 1166b1-30). But the Annas-reading cannot account for this.

more appropriate paradigm is that of a craftsman and his work. If his work were to come alive, Aristotle claims, it would not love its maker as much as its maker loves it. "This is the sort of thing, then, that the case of benefactors is in fact like: that which has been treated well is their work; thus they cherish this more than the work does its maker" (*NE* 1168a3-5). And the explanation of *this* is as follows:

> 1) Existing is, for everyone, worth choosing and lovable.
>
> 2) It is by our actuality that we exist, since we exist by living and acting.
>
> 3) The work is, somehow, its maker in actuality. (ἐνεργείᾳ δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστι πως·)
>
> Hence, he is fond of his work – for the reason that (διότι) he loves existing. And this is natural, because what he is potentially, his work reveals in actuality (*NE* IX.7 1168a5-8).

This argument has important implications for friendship. The main point it makes is that a friend loves and benefits his friend because he loves his own existence and activity. Friends serve to actualize each other.[69]

Now, it seems to me that to read this argument as *not* calling our attention to what motivates the agent is misguided, for Aristotle is doing just that – he's telling us *why* benefactors love their beneficiaries. The reason turns out to be the same as the reason why makers love their work, which is - that they love their own being and activity. It is passages like this that give rise to the main tension that we are trying to resolve; passages like this that, for instance, make Pakaluk wonder "how love for a friend on account of his being one's own activity would be compatible with loving him 'in his own right' and 'on

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[69] This seems to be in good keeping with Aristotle's claim that reciprocity is a key feature of friendship. The metaphor of the maker and his work really is an intriguing one when extended to friendship. For friends are each at once both the maker and the made, that which is shaped and that which does the shaping, that which is actualized and that which does the actualizing. Aristotle does not make this explicit himself, but I take it to be a natural extension of his theory. This is something I will discuss at length in Chapter III.

account of himself' (as in VIII.3)" (1998, 187). It is for IX.7 in particular that the defenders of USL rely heavily on C1). Whiting, for instance, claims that Aristotle here is merely appealing to facts about what people, as a matter of psychological fact, tend to love and cherish, but is not using these facts to justify how the virtuous *ought* to be motivated.[70]

In order to successfully make this point about IX.7, Whiting directs our attention to VIII.12, where Aristotle notes that parents are more fond of their children than their children fond of them because parents regard their children as something of themselves (1161b18-29). Noting the similarity to IX.7, Whiting claims: "Those who take Aristotle's conception of the friend as an 'other-self' as endorsing bias toward those similar to oneself rests on the mistaken view that he takes similarity as such not simply to *explain* but also to *justify* partiality toward those similar to oneself. But part of his point in recommending the character-friendship ideal is to reject such egocentric views" (2006, 291).

Whiting's endorsement of C1) makes for a very awkward reading of IX.7. On her reading, we would have to understand Aristotle to be saying something like: "People tend to love their friends because they love their own actuality, but this is not the way the virtuous agent *ought* to behave. He ought to love his friend independently of loving his own actuality." This is clearly not how IX.7 proceeds. Aristotle says simply that benefactors love their beneficiaries because they regard them as their own actualities, and that to regard them as such is natural. If Whiting's reading were correct, we would expect Aristotle to express some sort of indignation toward the fact that the many are

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[70] Whiting (2006, 288-290).

disposed to value their friends in this deficient sort of way, and we would expect him to praise the virtuous person for valuing his friends in the right way. Nothing at all like this happens in IX.7. There is simply nothing in the text to indicate clearly that Aristotle is appealing merely to what people, as a matter of psychological fact, tend to love, while not endorsing those motivations for the virtuous agent.[71] In fact, there are further considerations that positively rule out C1) as a plausible reading.

Immediately after the argument in IX.7 we have just been discussing, Aristotle claims:

> ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῷ μὲν εὐεργέτῃ καλὸν τὸ κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν, ὥστε χαίρειν ἐν ᾧ τοῦτο, τῷ δὲ παθόντι οὐδὲν καλὸν ἐν τῷ δράσαντι, ἀλλ' εἴπερ, συμφέρον: τοῦτο δ' ἧττον ἡδὺ καὶ φιλητόν.
>
> And at the same time, for the benefactor, what is in accordance with his action is noble; as a consequence, he takes pleasure in the person in whom this [is found]; but for the one treated well, there is nothing noble in the agent, but if anything, something advantageous; yet this is less pleasant and less lovable. (*NE* IX.7 1168a10-14)

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[71] There is an extensive contemporary literature on the distinction between motivating and normative reasons, also sometimes called explanatory and justifying reasons. Seminal work in this area includes Nagel (1970), Williams (1981), and Parfit (1997). Explanatory or motivating reasons explain why agents do certain things, while normative or justifying reasons are those that exist independently of the agent's psychological states and justify his action. If Smith kills Jones, his motivating reason is may be that Jones slept with his wife. But there (presumably) is not a justifying reason for Smith to kill Jones. If there is famine in a third-world country, there exists a normative or justifying reason to alleviate it, though no one might be motivated to alleviate it. Whiting seems to be claiming that when Aristotle says that we love our friends for self-regarding reasons, he is only ascribing motivating reasons to certain agents. The justifying or normative reasons to benefit a friend are always other-regarding (for the friend's sake). It is not at all clear that Aristotle recognizes anything like this distinction, as he characteristically conflates the descriptive and normative levels often in the *Ethics*. But assuming he does recognize such a distinction, clearly it is his view that for the virtuous agent – the normative reasons *are* his motivating reasons. This makes Whiting's interpretation very hard to swallow, for we have to assume that whenever Aristotle ascribes self-regarding motives to the agent, he's not talking about the virtuous agent but someone else. While he may not make explicitly clear in the IX.7 passage that he is talking about the virtuous agent, he certainly does make clear in IX.4 and IX.8, as we shall see below.

It has been pointed out by Pakaluk that this passage both anticipates and underwrites Aristotle's claim in the very next chapter – IX.8 - that someone who benefits another actually gets the greater good (*NE* IX.8 1169a18-b1).[72]

> ὀλίγον γὰρ χρόνον ἡσθῆναι σφόδρα μᾶλλον ἕλοιτ' ἂν ἢ πολὺν ἡμέρα... καὶ χρήματα προοῖντ' ἂν ἐφ' ᾧ πλείονα λήψονται οἱ φίλοι· γίνεται γὰρ τῷ μὲν φίλῳ χρήματα, αὐτῷ δὲ τὸ καλόν· τὸ δὴ μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀπονέμει.
>
> For he would choose to enjoy himself intensely for a brief while rather than slightly for a long time; and to live nobly for a year, rather than as chance may have it for many years... And he gives up money on condition that his friends receive more, since the friend gets money, but he gets what is noble; thus he assigns the greater good to himself (*NE* IX.8, 1169a18-30).

The two sets of passages make clear that Aristotle thinks that what motivates benefactors to aid their beneficiaries is a desire to attain the *kalon* – the greater good - for themselves. Aristotle clearly describes the good person as having certain preferences with respect to nobility and noble action in IX.8, and his use of verbs like ἕλοιτ' and ἀπονέμει surely pick out the agent's intentions.[73] And in IX.8, Aristotle is very clearly talking about the virtuous person. C1), therefore, fails. We therefore cannot read him as merely pointing out, *sans* endorsement, that agents tend to help their friends for self-regarding reasons.[74]

As for C2) and C3): Since C1) has failed, there is no reason to resort to C3) – the claim that the agent acts for the sake of his own happiness only from a third-person

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[72] Pakaluk (1998, 183).

[73] Taylor (2006, 90) makes this point.

[74] Yet Annas still wants to say that "the agent's aim is just acting for the sake of others," and that "in doing this he is in fact getting some good for himself, but this is not part of his aim." The thesis of IX.8, she claims, is "not a thesis about what our aims should be, but rather a thesis about the way our life should turn out to be, though not as a matter of our conscious aim" (1998, 12). On Annas' reading, we would have to understand Aristotle to be making the claim that, independently of what actually motivates the good person, the outcomes of his actions just happen to coincide with those preferences.

perspective by doing something that is good for himself without aiming to do something good for himself. The passages make clear that the agent acts for the sake of his own happiness from a first-person perspective. C2) is more complicated, and again I point out that nowhere whatsoever in the books on friendship does Aristotle claim that the only way to achieve one's own *eudaimonia* is to not aim at it. Nowhere does he say that the only way to achieve self-realization is to aim at the good of one's friend for its own sake and for no other reason. And of course, since we have seen that the passages imply that the virtuous agent consciously aims at his own happiness, C2) must be ruled out. But then why would anyone think that C2 is true?

One defender of C2) is Whiting (2002). While it applies to friendship, it is intended to apply more generally to virtuous actions. I will therefore take up C2) again in Chapter IV in which I address the problem of motivation regarding virtue and happiness. But let us look at Whiting's argument as it applies to friendship:

> If eudaimonia consists in the actualization (or exercise) of our essential capacities, then the eudaimonist axiom might seem to require that we choose all things ultimately for the sake of actualizing (or exercising) these capacities. And this might seem to require that we choose to perform virtuous and friendly actions ultimately for the sake of actualizing our capacities for friendship and virtue. But this seems to conflict with Aristotle's requirements (a) that we choose to perform virtuous actions for themselves and (b) that we love our friends for themselves and not insofar as doing so coincides with or is instrumental to other ends we happen to have. These requirements suggest that the capacities for virtue and friendship are such that they cannot be actualized by someone aiming ultimately at their actualization. For their actualization requires the agent to aim ultimately at something other than their actualization" (Whiting 2002, 282-83).

Given that there is no positive textual evidence to support C2), this argument is difficult to swallow. It is true that aiming at one's own happiness seems, *prima facie,* to conflict with aiming at the good of one's friend for the friend's sake. But why should the

requirement that we aim at our friend's good for its own sake suggest that "the capacities for virtue and friendship are such that they cannot be actualized by someone aiming ultimately at their actualization"? The suggestion does not follow. By the very same token, the requirement suggests that the only way to aim at the good of one's friend for its own sake is to aim at it for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia,* as the constitutive solution claims. Or, the requirement might suggest that the virtuous agent's motivation is overdetermined in some way, as the overdetermination solution claims. There is no reason to attribute to Aristotle a view for which he never advocates.

2.3. The Nagelian Interpretation

Before laying unintentional self-love to rest, one last line of defense for it ought to be considered. We saw in IX.4 that Aristotle argued for the causal/psychological thesis (i), according to which friendship grows out of self-love and is a mode of self-love. Whiting at times seems to interpret this thesis in a way that is consistent with unintentional self-love.

> Aristotle's point seems to be that insofar as a genuinely virtuous person loves and values virtue simply as such, and so loves and values herself insofar as she is virtuous, the virtuous person will (as a matter of psychological fact) be disposed to love other virtuous persons on account of *their* virtues. So if, as IX.4 suggests, the virtuous agent's attitudes toward his friends derives from his attitudes toward himself, he will not love his friends because they are his "other selves" in the sense that they are simply *like* him: he will love them, as he loves himself, because they are *good.* Any likeness they bear to him is a mere sign of what really matters – namely, their respective goodness (Whiting 2006, 291).

The idea, I take it, is this: The virtuous agent loves himself insofar as he loves his virtuous character, for this is what he essentially is (1156b7-9). This amounts to his loving virtue *as such, not* necessarily *his* virtue, but just virtue. Because he is naturally

disposed to feel this way about virtue, he is naturally able to extend the same sort of concern to his friend insofar as his friend's virtue warrants this response.

Whiting thinks that this idea is integral to how Aristotle goes about solving the *aporia* of IX.8 – whether one should love oneself, or someone else, most of all. She thinks that he resolves this puzzle by "rejecting the dichotomous assumption on which it turns": that one must *either* love oneself most of all *or* love someone else most of all.

> Once we accept his distinction between self-love properly construed and self-love as it is usually (but mistakenly) understood, we are supposed to see an important sense in which self-love properly construed is *impartial*: insofar as self-love properly construed involves the virtuous person's love for herself *qua virtuous,* and insofar as a genuinely virtuous agent will value virtue as such, the virtuous agent should love other virtuous agents in much the same way that she loves herself (i.e., *qua virtuous*) (2009, 293).

The claim here seems to be that another person's virtue provides one with an *agent-neutral* reason to promote it (this is the sense in which self-love properly construed is "impartial"). Virtue is just this sort of thing, and the virtuous agent is disposed, as a matter of psychological fact, to respond to it. Why, then, should one promote another's welfare *for his sake*? Because reason demands it. Obviously this has close ties with Thomas Nagel's view that altruism is a rational requirement on action, and though Whiting does not claim to be attributing Nagel's view to Aristotle, it would appear that she has it in mind.[75] Her (and Annas') reading of the other-self claim would be congenial to that view. Remember, Whiting and Annas think that the claim that a friend is another self means just that I can come to have the same concern for my friend as I have for myself. One can easily see the Nagelian overtones of their interpretation – according to which I come to have that sort of concern for my friend because, when I reflect on the

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[75] See Nagel (1978).

value of my own personal perspective, if I am rational, I discover that the reasons I have to promote my own welfare give me reasons also to promote another's welfare. I am just one person among many, and there are certain things – like freedom from pain, survival, and health – which are impersonally valuable, things that I have reason to promote independently of my own perspective. Virtue is without a doubt (goes the thought) one of those things.[76]

This view also has an additional advantage, according to Whiting, for it can solve the *aporia* regarding friendship and self-sufficiency in IX.9.[77] Why would the happy, self-sufficient person need friends? The very need seems to threaten his self-sufficiency. Yet Aristotle insists that the virtuous person *does* need friends (*NE* IX.9 1169b29-1170b19). The trick is to spell out this need in a way that does justice to the claim that the virtuous person is self-sufficient. But if, as Whiting claims, the virtuous person has a natural tendency to take the same sort of intrinsic interest in another's good as he takes in his own good, one could then argue that, "given this tendency, a virtuous person who aims to flourish not only will but *should* have virtuous friends in the sense that there is *good reason* for her to do so" (Whiting: 2006, 297).

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[76] Engberg-Pedersen (1983, 40-50) explicitly argues for a Nagelian interpretation of IX.8, and is criticized by Stern-Gillet (1995, 106), Rogers (1993, 364 n15), and Madigan (1985, 1-2) for offering an interpretation that blatantly lacks positive textual evidence. This is not surprising, as Engberg-Pedersen holds the odd and textually unfounded view that the "basic problem in Aristotle is that of how natural goods should be shared" (1983, 44-49). According to Engberg-Pedersen, reason, for Aristotle, is "universal and impersonal" and leads one to conclude that he is just "one among many others" and hence he "does not place any special value on the natural good which is his life due to the mere fact that it is his own life" (1983, 44; 49). Reason prescribes that acting according to this principle is part of one's own *eudaimonia* because reason states that the best state for an individual is identical to the best state of everyone else - the community. Acting for the sake of the noble means to comply with the rational insight that in the sharing of natural goods one's own claim is initially no stronger than that of any other (1983, 45). I agree with the previously mentioned commentators that there is no basis for attributing to Aristotle the idea that the basic problem of IX.8 is how natural goods should be shared.

[77] This *aporia* will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

> The *eudaimôn* agent *should* have excellent friends, but *not* because she *needs* to. She *should* have them in the same sense in which she *should* contemplate or engage in virtuous action. Each of these activities is an *appropriate* response to ways the world is... Wishing another's good for her sake is an *appropriate* response to the recognized virtuous of another, a response that is (as a matter of psychological fact) characteristic of virtuous agents and that tends (as a matter of psychological fact) to lead – with time, intimacy and mutual recognition – to character-friendship (2006, 297).

On this view, there is no tension between self-sufficiency and the need for friends because the virtuous agent will *not* seek friends *because* he needs them. He befriends some virtuous person because that is simply the appropriate response to the other's virtue.

Whatever the merits of this view, it is certainly *not* Aristotle's. There is little evidence in IX.8 that the distinction between proper and base self-love is supposed to show that self-love properly construed is *impartial.* It is true that IX.8 is concerned with the difficulty of "whether one should love oneself most of all, or someone else" (*NE* IX.8, 1168a28-29). However, it is not the case, as Whiting assumes, that Aristotle resolves this puzzle by rejecting this "dichotomous assumption on which it turns" (Whiting 2006, 293). In fact, there is positive textual evidence against that assumption. Those who love themselves above all, Aristotle notes, are commonly criticized as being "self-lovers" (φίλαυτος). Good people, on the other hand, are thought by the many to be good because they act for the sake of others and put their own interests aside.

> And a bad person, it seems, does everything for his own sake, and the more wicked he is the more he is like that (hence people complain about him saying, for instance, that 'he does nothing without himself in mind'); whereas a good person acts on account of what is noble and for the sake of a friend, and thus he disregards his own interests (*NE* IX.9, 1168a31-36).

What Aristotle is saying here is that the many believe that to be a good person is to have the disposition to care for others for purely other-regarding reasons. People who are

"self-lovers", or "selfish" we might say, are commonly thought to be vicious. They award themselves the biggest shares in money, honors, and bodily pleasures, and gratify most of all the non-rational part of the soul, and for this reason they are reproached (*NE* IX.8, 1168b16-23). The virtuous person who is always eager to behave justly, in stark contrast, would never be called a self-lover (*NE* IX.8, 1168b21-28).

What happens in the very next passage is subtle and easy to miss, but it is crucial. In response to the common view of which he just spoke, Aristotle claims: "But their actions are at odds with these arguments, not surprisingly. For they say that one ought to love most of all the person who is most of all one's friend; *but*..." (1168b1-2). I deliberately cut off the passage because I want to emphasize that what comes next is Aristotle's own view, not just some view up for consideration. The passage deserves to be quoted in full:

> But a friend is most of all someone who wishes, or someone to whom are wished, good things for that person's sake, even if no one will know; but these belong most of all to a person in relation to himself; and so all the remaining things by which a friend is defined, since we have said that it is from oneself that all the characteristics of friendship extend additionally to others. And all the proverbs agree, for instance, 'a single soul'[78], 'friends' things are in common', 'friendship is equality', and 'the knee is closer than the shin' – since all of these would apply most of all to a person in relation to oneself. *For he most of all is a friend to himself; so he should also love himself most of all* (*NE* IX.8 1168b3-11; my emphasis).

Aristotle expresses his own view in this passage, for it is the same view that he expressed in IX.4.[79] From this point on, what Aristotle goes on to do is not to "reject the dichotomous assumption on which the problem turns", as Whiting claimed, but rather to

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[78] Diogenes Laertius reports of Aristotle that: "To the query, 'What is a friend?' his reply was, 'A single soul dwelling in two bodies'" (D.L. 5.20).

[79] Whiting either does not see this or disagrees without explicitly saying so. Politis (1993, 156-59) is on board with me: "Aristotle comes down squarely on the side of self-love. We should love ourselves above everything else: 'He [man] is his own best friend and therefore ought to love himself best' (1169b9-10)."

explicate a sense of self-love that is *not* pejorative. The virtuous person hardly disregards his own interests. To the contrary, "such a person would seem to be more of a self-lover; at any rate, he assigns to himself the noblest things and best goods, and he gratifies the supreme element in himself and complies with it in everything" (*NE* IX.8, 1168b29-32).[80] *This* is the point of IX.8 – that there is a sense in which self-love is *good,* so as to make the claim that the virtuous person ought to love himself most of all not sound wrongheaded. Aristotle's point is that the common picture of self-love is entirely erroneous.[81] The point is *not* that self-love in the proper sense is impartial, and such a reading is belied in addition by the fact that Aristotle speaks as strongly as he does about the virtuous agent vying for the noble *for himself* (*NE* IX.8 1169a1-18).

Furthermore, the idea that the good person loves and responds just to virtue *as such*, in the impartial way in which Whiting claims, is problematic. On this view, there would be no reason to favor some virtuous persons over others, which is what we

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[80] Aristotle distinguishes two kinds of self-love: the proper kind, and the base kind. Part of what it is to be a self-lover in the proper sense is to value what is truly valuable. The vicious are wrong to think that the external goods that they pursue have as much value as they think they do. External goods do have value, but not as much value as the life of virtue. Gratifying the non-rational part of one's soul is not as valuable as gratifying one's reason, or *nous*. Aristotle takes gratifying one's *nous* to be the essential mark of a proper self-lover, and this is because one's *nous* is one's true self - what one "truly is" (ὡς τούτου ἑκάστου ὄντος) (*NE* IX.8 1168b32-1169a3). (This will be thoroughly discussed in Chapter III.) There is a straightforward sense, then, in which what Aristotle marks out as proper self-love is more a kind of self-love than what he marks out as base self-love: base self-lovers don't love their real self, since they love their appetites. Proper self-lovers love their *nous*, which is the true self, so they are more literally lovers of self. Even more striking and to the point is Aristotle's claim that the good person "does the very things he should do – because every mind chooses what is best for itself, and a good person submits to his mind" (*NE* IX.8, 1169a17-18). The striking part of this passage is what Aristotle takes to be the reason why the good person does the right actions. The reason is that every mind chooses what is best for itself - music to the ears of the egoist. This is expressed by *gar* in the Greek: ὁ δ' ἐπιεικὴς, ἃ δεῖ, ταῦτα καὶ πράττει· πᾶς γὰρ νοῦς αἱρεῖται τὸ βέλτιστον ἑαυτῷ, ὁ δ' ἐπιεικὴς πειθαρχεῖ τῷ νῷ.

[81] Annas remarks that "Aristotle seems oddly determined to defend the thesis that the good person should be a lover of self, even at the cost of defending counter-intuitive theses and paradoxical reinterpretations of familiar beliefs" (1988, 12). It is unsurprising that a defender of unintentional self-love would find Aristotle's determination in this respect odd.

basically do when we have and maintain friendships.[82] But more importantly, and closely related to the previous point, the entire quasi-Nagelian framework is deeply flawed when applied to Aristotle's account of *philia*, for it causes us to forget just what Aristotle is talking about, namely – *friendship.* Aristotle's treatment of self-love occurs within his analysis of friendship, and he thinks that we have *more* reason to promote our friends' welfare than the welfare of strangers. In fact, he thinks that it is *unjust* to favor a stranger at the expense of a friend. The idea that virtue provides for anything like agent-neutral reasons for actions is fundamentally at odds with the fact that Aristotle thinks that our friends stand in normatively special relations to us that non-friends do not stand in. Consider the following passage:

> Just actions also differ, since they are not the same for parents toward children and for brothers towards each other, nor among comrades or among citizens, and similarly with other sorts of friendship. Hence injustices committed against each of these sorts of friend are different as well; and they become greater by being more directed against friends: for example, it is more horrible to withhold payment from a comrade than from a fellow citizen; to fail to come to the aid of a brother than of a stranger; and to strike one's father than any other person. It is natural that justice too increases along with friendship, as they are found in the same persons and extend equally (*NE* VIII.9 1159b36-1160a8).

Aristotle expresses the view here that we *ought* to be partial to our friends. The prescriptions of justice, he claims, carry more weight with respect to friends than with respect to non-friends.

2.4. Conclusion: Why Unintentional Self-Love Fails

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[82] It might even be the case that, on this view, there would be no reason *not* to go out and befriend every virtuous person alive. Now, one could say that this view of Whiting's is amenable to the idea that the history one has with one's friend makes that friend special in a way that other people are not. But I think that would be irrelevant. Whiting's thesis seems to be that one's virtue provides one with an agent-neutral reason to pursue it. Causal histories should not get in the way of that, for they are part of mere personal, subjective perspective.

To conclude our inquiry up to the present: The unintentional self-love strategy unjustifiably explains away passages in which Aristotle claims that the agent values and benefits his friend from self-regarding motives. None of C1-3 is true, as each cannot be squared with the passages we have examined. C1) - the most favored claim of USL - the claim that Aristotle only appeals to what agents, as a matter of psychological fact, tend to do, but *does not* endorse the motives of such agents, is particularly troubling. If true, Aristotle would, in effect, be making proscriptions of the following sort: "Our love for our friends comes from our love for ourselves, *but don't let your love for yourself infect the love you have for your friend, if you want to be virtuous. Love him for his own sake alone;*" "We love our friends because we love our own existing and activity, *but don't love your friend on account of this, but independently of it, if you want to be virtuous;*" "We love and assist our friends because we seek the noble (τὸ καλόν), the greatest good, since assisting a friend in need is noble, and we want the noble for ourselves. *But don't assist your friend because you seek the noble. Assist him purely for his own sake.*" The only thing motivating this awkward and implausible reading, it seems, is the fact that Aristotle says that we must love our friends for their sakes. Of course, I take seriously this claim. It is undoubtedly true that there is a tension to be resolved, but that does not mean that we should choose an implausible interpretation that resolves the tension by overwhelmingly favoring one side of it. Aristotle does not solve the problem of motivation by ridding the virtuous agent of the self-regarding motive. We must look to other solutions.

3. Overdetermination

Now would be a good time to recall the passage from I.7 that gives rise to the problem of motivation in the case of virtue and happiness. We ought to wonder why defenders of unintentional self-love like Whiting and Annas take Aristotle's requirement that we choose virtuous actions *for themselves,* along with his requirement that we wish our friends well for *their* sakes, to be incompatible with the view that our primary reason for engaging in such activities is that doing so is a form of self-realization, for Aristotle does not seem to take the requirement to be so incompatible:

> Honor, pleasure, understanding, and every virtue we certainly choose because of themselves, since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result; but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, supposing that through them we shall be happy (*NE* I.7, 1097b1-5).

The awkwardness of unintentional self-love shows its face here perhaps even more so than in the passages in Book IX that have been examined. Presumably, Annas and Whiting would read Aristotle here as saying that people, as a matter of psychological fact, tend choose virtue for the sake of happiness, but the virtuous agent ought only choose virtue for its own sake. But to understand Aristotle to be claiming in that passage that, "This is your end, but you *ought not* aim at it," is unnecessary and unwarranted.

Some have argued that what Aristotle means by saying that we choose virtue both for itself and for the sake of happiness is that on some occasions we choose virtue because it contributes to our happiness, and on other occasions we choose virtue for its own sake. The motives are independent of each other, and the virtuous move back and forth from acting on the one to acting on the other.[83] Applying this to friendship, Aristotle's view would be that on some occasions I aim at my friend's good for its own

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[83] Kenny (1965-6, 28). Gottlieb (2009, 138) wrongly attributes this view to Kraut (1989). She does not cite any page numbers. It is clearly not Kraut's view. His view, as will be discussed, is that "an act can be done for two independent reasons: to benefit others and to benefit oneself."

sake, and on other occasions I aim at it for the sake of my own happiness. As it has been noted in the literature,[84] this interpretation concedes to someone like Annas or Whiting the incoherence of something being chosen simultaneously for its own sake and for the sake of something else. It is also problematic because the requirement that we love and benefit our friends for their sakes is a necessary condition on friendship, according to Aristotle. If there are some occasions on which the virtuous agent aims at his friend's good purely for the sake of his own happiness and not for the sake of his friend, then Aristotle would in effect be saying that the virtuous agent acts wrongly pretty often. If virtue and friendship cannot be chosen both for themselves and for *eudaimonia,* Aristotle's agent appears always to be in a state of tension. On the one hand, he's told that *eudaimonia* is his ultimate end, but on the other hand, he's told that he's not being virtuous when he aims at that end. For these reasons, this interpretation ought to be avoided. The I.7 passage suggests that, and beckons us to see how, it is *not* incoherent to simultaneously choose X both for itself *and* for the sake of Y.

According to the overdetermination solution,[85] Aristotle's virtuous agent acts on behalf of his friend for two independent reasons: to benefit his friend, and to benefit himself. Both the self-regarding and other-regarding motives work together to cause the

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[84] Gottlieb (2009, 138).

[85] We call something "overdetermined" when it has more than one cause. There is a large and sophisticated literature on causal overdetermination, but not as large on motivational overdetermination (Hensen 1979 makes much use of it in criticizing and interpreting Kant). In the literature on causal overdetermination, philosophers struggle with the metaphysics of alleged cases of overdetermination. Some argue that overdetermination is metaphysically impossible, while others try to make sense of it. E.g. Funkhouser (2002), Spohn (2006), O'Connor (1976), Hall & Paul (2003), and Schaffer (2002). Rather than engage the question of whether overdetermination is metaphysically possible, I assume that it is possible in this section. This, in effect, strengthens the view I aim to show cannot be attributed to Aristotle. Also, to actively engage the causal overdetermination question would require us to consider the fact that the virtuous agent's actions are caused not only by his motives and reasons, but also by his upbringing, his brain states, and seemingly irrelevant things like oxygen. It is beyond the scope of the current project to take seriously issues of that nature, though I recognize their philosophical importance.

action.[86] The key for this strategy is to spell out the relation between the two motives in a way that gets rid of the *prima facie* conceptual and moral difficulties. To do this, the strategy relies on counterfactual claims. To make this more precise, I offer the same grid that I offered in Chapter I. First, we have our two motives:

> **M1)** The motive to choose the good of one's friend for its own sake.
>
> **M2)** The motive to choose the good of one's friend for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia.*

Then we have four possible counterfactual scenarios that describe the relation between the two motives:

> S1) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while M1 would be sufficient for action in the absence of M2 (but M2 would be insufficient for action in the absence of M1).[87]
>
> S2) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while M2 would be sufficient for action in the absence of M1 (but M1 would be insufficient for action in the absence of M2).
>
> S3) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while *either* M1 *or* M2 would be sufficient for action in the absence of the other.
>
> S4) Both M1 and M2 motivate in the actual case, while either M1 or M2 alone, in the absence of the other, would be *insufficient* for action.

Consider the following analogy that should help illustrate S1-4: Suppose we are driving along a street, and our car breaks down, and we need to push it home the rest of the way. For the purposes of the analogy, let's say that I represent M1 and you represent M2. According to S1, I would be sufficiently able to push the car home alone, without your

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[86] This view is found in Kraut (1989, 137-138) and Gottlieb (2009, 138-141). I have not found any other author who argues that Aristotle's virtuous agent is motivationally overdetermined, and Kraut and Gottlieb themselves do not go into the kind of detail that I will be going into in this section.

[87] This is the sort of scenario that Hensen (1979, 44) describes when he argues that a Kantian ought still have moral worth when he does the right thing both from duty and from immediate inclination as long as the motive from duty would have sufficed in the absence of the inclination.

help. This, of course, does not preclude us from pushing the car *together,* each equally contributing to getting the car home, which is what we do in S1.[88] According to S2, we again push the car home together, while you would be sufficiently able to push the car home alone without my help, but not vice versa. According to S3, we again push the car home together, even though each of us could very well get the job done without the help of the other. According to S4, each of us alone *would not* be able to push the car home, and each of our efforts together are necessary and sufficient to get the job done.

Before attempting to answer the question of which of these scenarios, if any, can be attributed to Aristotle, it would be best to go through the philosophical merits of each. But first, a brief note about motives.

3.1. How to Not Have a Motive

When we think about taking some course of action, we deliberate by considering the reasons we have to act or not act. Sometimes the circumstances can effectively cancel out a potential reason to act, and thereby effectively prevent a motive from being present. For instance, suppose Charlie is debating whether or not to take Philosophy 101 next semester as an elective. He has two reasons for wanting to take this course – one reason is that Professor X, his favorite professor, is teaching the course, and another reason is that it is a night class and Charlie loves night classes. Both of these reasons are working in him as motivators as he deliberates on what to do. But suppose he then

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[88] Examples and thought experiments like this abounds in the literature on causal overdetermination. For instance, Funkhouser (2002, 337) offers the following example which nicely illustrates our S3: "*A convicted spy stands before a firing squad. Two shooters have live ammunition, and each, at precisely the same time, succeeds in shooting the spy in the heart. Either bullet on its own would have killed the spy in roughly the same manner. The spy dies.*" Funkhouser calls this "independent causal overdetermination", which is the standard case.

discovers that the class has been moved from 8pm to 9am. Having discovered this, he can no longer be motivated to take the course because it's a night class, for it is no longer a night class. The circumstances prevent him from having one of the motives. Call this lack of a motive the circumstantial lack.

I think that the circumstantial lack best explains why agents in S1-4 would lack the motives they lack. So take Charlie in the previous example, and apply S1 to his case. We say, then, that Charlie signs up for the class both because he loves Professor X and because he loves night classes, but that in the absence of his motive to take the class because it is a night class, his motive to take the class because he loves Professor X would suffice for his taking the class (but not *vice versa*). And it seems to me a very important question – What could make Charlie *not* have the motive to take the class because it is a night class? One obvious way for Charlie not to have that motive, the way I just described, is for him to discover that the circumstances have changed such that it is no longer a night class. That seems to be a sensible way to understand the claims about motives being absent in each of S1-4.

But it's not the only way. When we say that Charlie signs up for the class both because he loves Professor X and because he loves night classes, but that in the absence of his motive to take the class because it is a night class, his motive to take the class because he loves Professor X would suffice for his taking the class, we might mean the following: If the circumstances were the *same*, but Charlie didn't care for night classes, he would still take the class because of his love for Professor X. Call this lack of a motive the desiderative lack. The main difference between the circumstantial lack and the desiderative lack is this: On the circumstantial lack, the agent's basic desires do not

change. Rather, in the counterfactual, the circumstances change so that one of the agent's desires becomes irrelevant. On the desiderative lack, in the counterfactual the circumstances remain the same but the agent's desires are described as different in that he no longer has one of them.

I raise this distinction because it needs to be pointed out that each of S1-4 implies at least that the counterfactuals in them are true in terms of the circumstantial lack. Consider S1: According to that scenario, I would choose to benefit my friend for his own sake even in the absence of my motive to benefit him for the sake of my own *eudaimonia.* If this is true, then it necessarily implies that if the circumstances changed so that benefiting my friend was not conducive to my own *eudaimonia,* I would still be sufficiently motivated to help him just because he's my friend. S2 necessarily implies that if the circumstances changed so that benefiting my friend were not conducive to my own *eudaimonia,* then I would not be motivated to help him. S3 (one half of it, at any rate) necessarily implies precisely what S1 implies. And S4 (one half of it at any rate) necessarily implies precisely what S2 implies. But, as we shall see shortly, it matters that the counterfactuals can also be understood in terms of the desiderative lack. This will become clear when we consider which, if any, of S1-4 can be attributed to Aristotle.

3.2. S1-4 and the Conceptual Difficulty

The conceptual difficulty is that it seems that choosing something for itself excludes choosing it for other reasons. As it was put in the previous chapter: If X is desired for its own sake, then X is an ultimate aim, and so the desire for X is an independent desire. But if X is desired for the sake of something else, X is not an

ultimate aim, and so the desire for X depends on the desire for something else. To say that X is desired both for its own sake and for the sake of Y would imply that X both is and is not an ultimate aim, and that the desire for X is both a dependent and independent desire. Each of S1-4 shows that this conceptual worry is misguided. What S1 shows is that that one *can* have an independent desire for X, while still desiring X for something else. That is, just because I desire X for the sake of Y does not mean that my desire for X *depends* on my desire for Y. In S1, my motive to choose the good of my friend for its own sake would suffice for action in the absence of my motive to choose the good of my friend for the sake of my own *eudaimonia, but not vice versa.* And though this counterfactual claim is true, it is nonetheless true that in the actual case both motives contribute. In contrast, S2 shows that just because X is desired for its own sake does not mean that it must be desired as an ultimate aim. In S2, my motive to choose the good of my friend for the sake of my own *eudaimonia* would suffice for action in the absence of my motive to choose the good of my friend for its own sake, *but not vice versa.* Nonetheless, in the actual case, the agent in S2 *is* motivated to choose X simply in virtue of X's intrinsic features, it's just that this motive is supplemented by the other.

S3 shows that it is possible to desire X for its own sake and to desire X for the sake of Y and for *both* of these desires to be *independent* of each other. Neither M1 nor M2 depends on the presence of the other for its causal efficacy. So, suppose I am debating whether to meet my friends at the restaurant around the corner where they planned to have dinner. I want to go because the restaurant has a dish that happens to be my favorite, and I also want to go because I want to see this one friend in particular, Sam, who figures to be there. In S3, if I found out that my favorite dish was suddenly taken off

the menu, but that Sam was going to be there, I would go. If I found out that Sam was not going to be there, but that my dish would be waiting for me, I would go. Finally, S4 shows that it is possible to desire X for its own sake and to desire X for the sake of Y and for *both* of these desires to be *dependent* on each other. Both M1 and M2 depend on the presence of the other for its causal efficacy. To use the previous example once again: In S4, I need to know both that my favorite dish is available *and* that Sam is going to be there in order for me to be sufficiently motivated to go to the restaurant.

The overdetermination solution, then, adequately resolves the conceptual difficulty. However, someone who thinks that the conceptual difficulty cannot be resolved might nonetheless insist that to choose X for its own sake, by definition, excludes choosing it for any other reason at all. But it is hard to see why we should accept this definition. If we think that a reason is a consideration that counts in favor of something, then we ought to say that to choose X for its own sake means to take X, by itself, as a consideration that counts in favor of choosing it. That other considerations might play a supporting role in the choice should not change the fact that X-for-itself was taken as a reason. However, those "other considerations" might present moral difficulties instead of conceptual ones, and this brings us to how S1-4 purport to deal with the moral difficulty involved in choosing the good of one's friend both for its own sake and for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia.*

3.3. S1-4 and the Moral Difficulty

The moral difficulty concerning the problem of motivation is that self-regarding motives spoil other-regarding motives and thereby make for a morally deficient agent.

Someone who benefits his friend, for example, just for his friend's sake and not for the sake of his own happiness seems morally better than someone who benefits his friend for his friend's sake *and* for the sake of his own happiness. It may be helpful to observe a remark that Annas makes regarding the noble (*to kalon*) in the IX.8 passage discussed in the previous section:

> Is the agent supposed to think, 'I'll sacrifice this money so that my friends can gain more, for that is a generous action, and so noble; *and* I'm sacrificing mere money and gaining the noble, so I'm assigning myself the greater good, and so come off best after all'? There is clearly something wrong with this thought; the second half undermines the first. The agent cannot give as his end in doing something *both* that he is helping his friends for their sake *and* that he is assigning himself the greater good (1988, 12).

Annas thinks that the only way to resolve the moral difficulty is to rid the agent of the self-regarding motive entirely. The overdetermination solution begs to differ.

While both motives causally contribute to the action in each of S1-4, the *strength* of each motive is different in each scenario. And this bears on the moral difficulty, for that difficulty may be able to be overcome if the other-regarding motive is of the right strength. Given the strength of the motives in each scenario, I argue that S2 and S4 cannot overcome the moral difficulty. S3 can overcome it, but not as well as S1. S1, I shall argue, is the ideal scenario. After making these arguments, we shall turn to the question of which, if any, of these scenarios can be attributed to Aristotle's virtuous agent.

In S2, the self-regarding motive (M2) is clearly the dominant motive since only that motive is the one that would suffice for action on its own. So, the other-regarding motive (M1) is *never enough* to get the agent to benefit his friend in this scenario. The agent always needs to think that he is about to do something that is beneficial from the

standpoint of his own *eudaimonia,* and if he does not have that thought, then there is no action. Clearly this does not get around the moral dilemma. And if we look at S4, we see that it too is of no help for basically the same reasons. In that scenario, it is also always the case that the other-regarding motive is *never enough* to motivate the agent to benefit his friend, and that the agent always needs to think that he is about to do something that is beneficial from the standpoint of his own *eudaimonia.* Now, in fairness to S4, it is *in addition* true in that scenario that the self-regarding motive is never enough to motivate the agent to benefit his friend. The two motives need each other. Circumstances must be such that the agent does something both worth doing for itself and worth doing for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.* But from a moral standpoint, it counts against S4 that the agent will not choose to do what is worth doing for its own sake when doing so does not benefit him.

S1 is fully equipped to resolve the moral difficulty, for that scenario is precisely the opposite of S2. That is, in S1 it is the other-regarding motive (M1) that is the dominant one, since it is present at the time of the action and also would have sufficed on its own for the action. The self-regarding motive in S1 would *not* suffice on its own. This tells us something about the agent's priorities – that he values his friend more than he values his own happiness since he is prepared to sacrifice his own happiness for his friend should the circumstances call for it. Now, all of that is true in S3 as well, since in that scenario too the other-regarding motive would suffice for action on its own. But S3 is complicated since it is also the case in that scenario that the self-regarding motive would suffice for action on its own. This creates a problem for S3. The problem arises when we ask what could make it the case that the agent lacks the other-regarding motive

and only has the self-regarding motive (which would suffice for action).[89] Whatever makes it the case, it *cannot* be that when the agent finds himself in a set of circumstances in which his own happiness and the good of his friend conflict, he chooses to side with his own happiness. After all, the very action in question is the action of *benefiting one's friend.* And besides, half of S3 already establishes that when the good of one's friend and one's own happiness conflict, the good of one's friend sufficiently motivates one to help one's friend. Therefore, when S3 says that the self-regarding motive would suffice in the absence of the other-regarding motive, we must interpret that claim to mean: "If A's character friend B was on some occasion not worth benefiting for B's sake, A would still benefit B for the sake of A's *eudaimonia.*" This is pretty odd. It is unclear what could ever make it the case that the good of one's friend was not worth choosing for its own sake but still worth choosing for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia.* But odd does not equal impossible or incoherent, so it may stand as is. With the concession to that oddity, S3 can resolve the moral difficulty since it makes the other-regarding motive dominant.

Might we be able to understand the lack of the other-regarding motive in S3 to be a desiderative lack rather than a circumstantial lack? On this view, the circumstances don't change. Rather, the claim being made is just that *if* the agent only had the self-regarding motive when he had a chance to benefit his friend, that motive would suffice. But this comes at a cost, for we have to imagine the agent in this case as someone who *does not* desire the good of his friend for its own sake. We would in effect be saying the following of the agent: "If he was not a good friend, he would be sufficiently motivated to benefit his friend for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.*" This is uninformative and does

[89] This problem also arises for S2. I did not mention it before because all that was pertinent for S2 was that the other-regarding motive was never enough to get the agent to benefit his friend. This provided sufficient grounds for claiming that S2 cannot resolve the moral difficulty.

nothing to assuage the moral difficulty. We should stick to understanding the lack of the other-regarding motive in S3 in terms of the circumstantial lack, then. In that way, S3 can resolve the moral difficulty, because it still remains the case that the other-regarding motive is dominant enough to get the agent to benefit his friend. But because S1 can resolve the moral difficulty without having to endorse the odd claim that if the good of one's friend were ever not worth choosing for its own sake then the agent would choose it for the sake of his own *eudaimonia,* it is the ideal scenario. Ideally, we'll want to be able to attribute S1 to Aristotle.

3.4. Why None of S1-4 Can Be Attributed to Aristotle

Let us distinguish between whether S1-4 can be attributed to Aristotle in terms of the circumstantial lack and whether S1-4 can be attributed to Aristotle in terms of the desiderative lack. These are separate issues. I first want to show that none of S1-4 should be attributed to Aristotle on the desiderative lack interpretation, and then show the same for the circumstantial lack. The desiderative lack interpretation of lacking a motive asks us to imagine what the agent would do if he entirely lacked one of those motives because he entirely lacked the desire that gives rise to that motive. So take S1. Here we would say that the agent currently acts from both the self-regarding and other-regarding motives, but if he lacked the desire to pursue the good of his friend for the sake of his own happiness, he would nonetheless be sufficiently motivated to choose the good of his friend. For S2, we would say that the agent currently acts from both the self-regarding and other-regarding motives, but if he lacked the desire to pursue the good of his friend for its own sake, he would still perform the action. For S3, we would say that the agent

currently acts from both the self-regarding and other-regarding motives, but if he lacked the desire to pursue the good of his friend for the sake of his own happiness, he'd pursue the good of his friend nonetheless, *and* that if he lacked the desire to pursue the good of his friend for its own sake, he would pursue it nonetheless for the sake of his own happiness. For S4, we would say that the agent currently acts from both the self-regarding and other-regarding motives, but if he lacked either desire, he would *not* perform the action.

But if we look closer at what each scenario asks us to imagine here, we will see that none of them can be what Aristotle means. Each scenario, on the desiderative lack interpretation, basically asks us to imagine what the agent would do if he were a very different kind of person. In every scenario other than S1, we end up having to ask what a good friend would do if he weren't a good friend. Even in S1, we're asked to imagine what the agent would do if he were a different kind of agent than the one Aristotle describes. Aristotle clearly describes the good friend as wanting the good of his friend for its own sake and for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.* It simply doesn't help to ask what this agent would do if he were a different agent with different desires.[90] Remember, on the circumstantial lack interpretation of lacking a motive, the agent's basic desires do not change. Rather, the circumstances change so as to make one of those desires irrelevant, thus preventing the presence of the motive based on that desire. For the purpose of discovering Aristotle's solution to the problem of motivation, then, it is only

[90] Professor Sher has raised the objection that a person's desires can change without the person changing. In other words, the agent's desires may simply waver from time to time. Sometimes he's motivated to value his friend for the sake of his own *eudaimonia,* and sometimes (for whatever reasons) he's not. Sometimes he's motivated to value his friend for the friend's sake, and sometimes (for whatever reasons) he's not. Here I respond by appealing to Aristotle's conception of the *phronimos* – the person of practical wisdom – which is the agent with whom we (and Aristotle) are concerned. Due to the sophisticated demands of being a *phronimos* (see *NE* VI, especially chapter 13), his desires are not prone to such wavering.

on the circumstantial lack interpretation that the counterfactuals make sense and are potentially helpful.

But here lies the main problem for attributing the circumstantial lack interpretation of the overdetermination solution to Aristotle. The main question that solution asks is this: What would the agent do if his friend became no longer valuable from the standpoint of the agent's own *eudaimonia?* If circumstances somehow made it so that valuing and benefiting his friend in no way whatsoever contributed to his own *eudaimonia,* what would he do? The problem is that Aristotle *never* recognizes circumstances of that kind. He does not, I claim, think it possible that a friend could ever *not* be beneficial to the agent from the standpoint of the agent's own *eudaimonia.*[91] In short, the main reason none of S1-4 can be attributed to Aristotle in terms of the circumstantial lack is this: Aristotle does not think that there can be circumstances between friends A and B in which A benefits B without there being a eudaimonic benefit for A.[92] But each of S1-4 exploits the possibility of such circumstances. Indeed, the ability of S1-4 to resolve the moral difficulty depends on the possibility of such circumstances and on what the agent does under those circumstances. The agent in S1, for example, is not morally blameworthy because he *would* still be motivated to pursue

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[91] Unless the friend becomes vicious, in which case Aristotle says that the agent may have to end the friendship! (*NE* IX.3)

[92] Professor Mackie has raised the objection that Aristotle could be conceding that this is a theoretical possibility that is never in fact actualized. For now I am willing to grant that it is possible that Aristotle makes this concession. I shall strike this objection with what I hope is a fatal blow in the next chapter. For now, I think the fact that Aristotle does not recognize any such circumstances counts against the overdetermination solution (I say more about this in the rest of this section).

the good of his friend even if doing so would not in any way contribute to his own *eudaimonia.*[93]

The one place in the books on friendship where he might be thought to countenance such circumstances is a passage in IX.8 that has been examined in section 2. At 1169b18-34, Aristotle claims that the good person will give up goods to his friend and even sacrifice his life if necessary. But the reason Aristotle gives for why the good person does this is that the good person wants the *kalon,* which is described as the greater good. After all, "every *nous* chooses what is best for itself" (1169a18).

> καὶ χρήματα προοῖντ' ἂν ἐφ' ᾧ πλείονα λήψονται οἱ φίλοι· γίνεται γὰρ τῷ μὲν φίλῳ χρήματα, αὐτῷ δὲ τὸ καλόν· τὸ δὴ μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀπονέμει.
>
> And he gives up money on condition that his friends receive more, since the friend gets money, but he gets what is noble; thus he assigns the greater good to himself (*NE* IX.8, 1169a18-30).

In this manner, Aristotle says, the good person acts as a self-lover (1169b1-2). So, even in cases of "self-sacrifice", the self-regarding motive is clearly at play.[94] Therefore, IX.8 does not give us an agent who is or would be sufficiently motivated by the other-regarding motive in the absence of the self-regarding motive. When it comes to friendship, Aristotle does not think that there can be circumstances that effectively prevent the motivational efficacy of the self-regarding motive.

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[93] Gottlieb (2009, 140) thinks that S1 accurately describes what Aristotle means, and relies on an interpretation of the I.7 1097b1-5 passage to defend that view. Because she does not discuss friendship *per se*, but only virtue & happiness, I will save a more thorough discussion of her view for Chapter IV.

[94] See Wielenberg (2004, 278-286), who correctly notes that even when giving up actions themselves for a friend, the agent does so because it is nobler to do so. "For a given virtuous action *V,* enabling one's friend to perform *V* is more ethically virtuous than performing *V* oneself. So, in enabling his friend to perform the virtuous action, an ethically virtuous person actually acts more virtuously than his friend does. In this way, he assigns the larger share of virtuous activity to himself and, once again, gets the better end of the bargain" (2004, 284).

Now, that alone may not be a fatal blow against the overdetermination solution. Perhaps Aristotle just thinks that it is just a matter of happy fortune that the circumstances always provide us with a eudaimonic benefit to value and benefit our friends, even in the most extraordinary of circumstances. But the fact that Aristotle does not think that there are such circumstances as required by S1 strongly indicates, to me at least, something important: It indicates that valuing a friend *for himself* is intimately intertwined somehow with valuing him insofar as he contributes to one's own *eudaimonia.* That is, it indicates that the standard way of understanding what it means to value something for itself is not the way in which Aristotle understands it. If it were the way he understood it, then the IX.8 passage above would seem to make for a very morally unattractive agent. The reason for this is that in that passage, Aristotle does not seem to mention an other-regarding motive at all. All he says is that the agent "sacrifices" for his friend so that the agent may attain the greater good of nobility. Remember, the standard meaning of valuing someone for himself says that to value a friend for his own sake is to value him independently of how he contributes to one's own *eudaimonia,* and to take his good as something that *by itself* provides a reason to promote it. Aristotle's agent in the IX.8 passage is apparently doing neither of these things. Rather, the agent in that passage values his friend purely in virtue of a desire for nobility, thus purely in virtue of a desire for his own good.

However, if valuing a friend for his own sake is intimately intertwined with valuing him for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia,* i.e. if to value a friend for his own sake just is, somehow, to value him for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia,* then the passage would have to be interpreted differently. But in addition to these things, our

refutation of unintentional self-love, particularly our refutation of Annas' interpretation of Aristotle's derivation of friendship from self-love in the IX.4 passage, strongly indicates that Aristotle is working with some other meaning of "choosing something for itself" than the standard meaning. As we have seen, according to the argument of IX.4, we love our friends for their sakes *because* they are our "other selves". Valuing a friend for his own sake, therefore, does not seem to be a way of valuing him independently of how he stands in relation to oneself. The constitutive solution then, according to which we value our friends as constituents of our own happiness, seems promising. To that solution we now turn.

4. The Constitutive Solution

The constitutive solution takes its cue from a certain interpretation of Aristotle's view of the relation between virtue and happiness, one famously offered by John Ackrill. The basic idea is that virtue is valued as a *constituent part of eudaimonia,* rather than as an *instrumental means to eudaimonia* (this, as we shall soon see, is a key contrast).

> That the primary ingredients of *eudaimonia* are for the sake of *eudaimonia* is not incompatible with their being ends in themselves; for *eudaimonia* is constituted by activities that are ends in themselves... when Aristotle says that A is for the sake of B, he need not mean that A is a means to a subsequent B but may mean that A contributes as a constituent to B. This is what he does mean when he says that good actions are for the sake of *eudaimonia.*[95]

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[95] Ackrill (1980, 29-30); cf. Irwin (1999, 182): "The highest good, chosen only for its own sake, is composed of the non-instrumental goods that are chosen both for their own sakes and for the sake of the highest good. To choose them for the sake of happiness is not to choose them purely as instrumental means, since the 'for the sake of' relation, as Aristotle understands it, includes the relation of part to whole." It should be noted that Ackrill (and Irwin) is not directly taking up the problem of motivation, but rather is defending an inclusive conception of *eudaimonia* against an exclusive conception according to which *eudaimonia* consists solely in θεωρία.

The idea that the agent aims at virtue as a constituent part of happiness rather than as an instrumental means to it is one that has been applied to friendship by scholars who seek mainly to assuage the worries of those who fear that Aristotelian friendship is too egoistic and cannot properly do justice to the requirement that we love our friends for their sakes. The thought is that if John aims at Sally's good as an instrumental means to his own good (as would appear to be the case in friendships of pleasure and utility), then he's not acting for her sake, but rather for his own. But if John aims at Sally's good as a constituent of his good, that is, as something that is an integral part of his own good, then he is still being a good friend.[96] At least, he's not pejoratively egoistic, as he appeared to be in the instrumental case, so the thought goes. A representative quote:

> *Eudaimonia* is not to be understood as restricted to a person's narrowly conceived interests; it is not, for instance, a hedonist's conception of happiness. Rather, it may include such things as the happiness of others. On such a construal, I can desire the good for my friend for his own sake while adhering to the eudaimonist axiom because my friend's good is *part* of my own *eudaimonia;* whenever I act for my friend's sake I am *also* acting for my sake.[97]

One piece of textual support for this view is in VIII.3, where Aristotle describes the defect found in friendships based on pleasure and utility. In these relationships, friends

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[96] Whether this is truly enough is taken up in section 4.1.

[97] Milgram (1987, 375). What's really interesting about Milgram's view is that he objects to this strategy *not* because it cannot properly do justice to the claim that we value our friends *for their sakes* (which is the natural thought, I think), but rather because it threatens to make the eudaimonist axiom empty. The constitutive view is also found in Politis (1993, 158): "One's own concern for one's own good is always present, even in acting altruistically, in so far as acting altruistically, too, is an ingredient or constituent in – though not an instrumental means to – one's own good;" Brink (1997, 147): "Aristotle believes that *eudaimonia* is the only unconditionally complete good; all other goods are chosen for its sake. Some goods chosen for the sake of *eudaimonia,* though not choiceworthy in themselves, are choiceworthy as causal means to some ingredient of *eudaimonia*; these goods are incomplete, instrumental goods. But other goods – such as the virtues – that are chosen for the sake of *eudaimonia* are also choiceworthy for themselves. They are chosen for the sake of *eudaimonia* in the sense that they are constituent parts of *eudaimonia*; they are valuable in their own right for their constitutive contribution to a valuable life. In friendship, the lover is concerned for the other's own sake while valuing his beloved's well-being for the constitutive contribution this makes to his own *eudaimonia*;" and Irwin (1988, 393-394).

"do not love each other in their own right, but rather in so far as something good comes to them from the other" (1156a10-12). This suggests that what makes these relationships defective is that the concern that friends have for one another in them is purely instrumental. By contrast, in friendships based on character, friends love each other for their own sakes. But notice that just because Aristotle thinks that character-friends do not value each other purely instrumentally does not mean that he does not think that they value each other for different self-regarding reasons. So, by contrasting valuing someone for his own sake with valuing someone for the sake of utility or pleasure, Aristotle need not be contrasting purely other-regarding concern with purely self-regarding concern.

The other main loci of textual support for this view are IX.4 and the other-self claim, and the argument of IX.7. These commentators read Aristotle's claim that a friend is another self as explaining how the agent's *eudaimonia* comes to include that of others. Since my friend's activity is an extension of my own activity, with the actualization of myself in him (*NE* IX.4 1166a30-4; IX.7 1168a5-8), *his well-being becomes a part of mine*. The result of this is that, to put it in Aristotle's own words: "It is through loving their friend that they love what is good for themselves, since a good person who becomes a friend becomes a good for the person to whom he is a friend; so each of them, then, loves what is good for himself" (*NE* VIII.5 1157b32-37).

> But then we can see how Aristotle can think that friendship involves concern for the friend's own sake and yet admits of eudaimonist justification. If B extends A's interests, then B's interests are a part of A's. This is true when A and B are the same person and when they are different people. My friend's good is a part of my own overall good in just the way that the well-being of my future self is part of my overall good.[98]

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[98] Brink (1997, 131).

Now, this solution still has quite a lot of explaining to do. At the start of this chapter, I argued for a certain reading of the IX.4 passage according to which I value my friend, basically, insofar as I see myself in him. This point, and the very points raised by the commentators who endorse the constitutive solution, are the very sort of points that Annas and Whiting railed against. As Whiting argued, the idea that I should wish well to my friend for his sake *because* doing so is a form of my own self-realization, seems morally problematic (2006, 297). So we must ask two questions:

> **Q1:** How is it, exactly, that by aiming at my friend's good as a constituent part of my own, I thereby aim at his good *for his sake*? That is, with just what meaning of "for his own sake" is the constitutive solution working?
>
> **Q2:** Does the answer to Q1 show that I am not aiming at the good of my friend in a morally objectionable way?

The answers to both of these questions are to be found in this crucial distinction between something being an *instrumental means to* a good, and something being a *constituent of* a good. Most unfortunately, while many like to draw this distinction, few clearly explicate just what it amounts to.[99] So awkward does the use of this distinction become, that commentators often end up speaking of how a friend's good *contributes to* the good of

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[99] One would expect to find a clear statement or two of this distinction in the vast literature on whether Aristotle thinks that *eudaimonia* is a dominant or inclusive end. But I have been hard-pressed to find any clear and precise statement of it in any of the following sources: Ackrill (1980), Crisp (1994), Cooper (1999), Devereaux (1981), Keyt (1989), Roche (1988), White (1990), Kraut (1989), Lear (2004), Van Cleemput (2006), and Whiting (1986). I finally stumbled upon something resembling a clear statement of the distinction in Keyt (1983, 368), who actually took his cue from Greenwood (1973, 46-47). Greenwood claims that: "A thing may be a means to an end in either of two senses, as a component part of it, or as wholly external to it. To take a trivial example, fire and basin and cloth are means to a pudding in the latter sense, suet and flour and currants in the former. Happiness being considered as the end, the contemplation of beautiful pictures may be considered rightly or wrongly as a means to this end in the component sense, the going to picture galleries as a means to it in the external sense." But to say that the difference between a component and an instrumental means is that one is a component and the other is external is not very precise, and somewhat question-begging. So, in this section, I offer my own statement of the distinction.

the agent in lieu of using the language of "being a means".[100] But saying that I aim at my friend's good because of the way his good contributes to my good just sounds like a euphemistic way of saying that I aim at his good as a means to mine.

4.1. Instrumental Means Versus Constituents

I propose that the best way to understand the distinction is as follows: Instrumental means are relevantly distant from their ends in a way that constituents are not. Furthermore, instrumental means *can fail* to cause their ends, whereas to treat a constituent of an end is *ipso facto* to treat the end. I care about an instrumental means only insofar as it is a way of bringing about some other end that is related to it in only a cursory kind of way. I need to get to campus in the morning, and taking the bus is my usual means of getting there. But there are lots of other ways I can get to campus. I can walk, I can ask a friend for a ride, or I can bike. All of these modes of transportation are efficient-causal means of getting me to campus. It is also possible for the bus to break down, for my legs to get too tired to go further, and for my friend to forget to pick me up. These means *can fail* to cause their ends, and when they do, we no longer value them on the occasion in which they fail. By contrast, a constituent of an end is – as the name indicates – *constitutive of* that end. This being the case, there is not the same distance between it and the end as there is in the case of instrumental means. To care about and promote the good of the constituent is to care about and promote the good of the end, precisely because of the constitutive relation. For example, the strings on a guitar are constitutive of the guitar. To harm them or to treat them well is to, *ipso facto,* harm or

[100] So, Brink (in the above quote) speaks of the friend's well-being as making a "constitutive contribution" to the well-being of his friend.

treat well the guitar itself. Insofar as I am making sure that the strings are in good shape – in tune, shiny, etc. – I am making sure that the guitar is in good shape.

Taking that explanation of the distinction as a guide, let us try and answer Q1. One answer to that question is this: By aiming at something as a constituent part of some whole, I aim at it for its own sake *precisely because I am not aiming at it as an instrumental means.* Here is where we must keep in mind the relevant distance between a means and an end that characterizes instrumental means. I can aim at the good of a constituent part of some whole for its own sake because I am not trying to use it to achieve *some further end.* It is rather part of the very end I am already trying to achieve, and my aiming at it therefore stands in no further need of justification. Therefore, by aiming at my friend's good as a constituent part of my own good, I aim at his good for his sake because there is no further end I am trying to achieve by aiming at his good - no further end that bears any efficient-causal relation to my aiming at his good. And by aiming at his good, I am *ipso facto* aiming at mine, and so I aim at my own happiness as well. In this sense, I choose my friend's good both for its own sake and for the sake of my own happiness at one and the same time.

We might question whether we have enough here to provide for an adequate account of how one aims at a friend's good both for the friend's sake and for the sake of one's own happiness. It matters just how tight the constitutive relation is between the part and the whole. I might try to take care of my guitar strings just because I think strings in themselves ought to look nice and be in good shape, but not because they are a part of the guitar, and in this case it seems I might care more about them for their sake than someone who takes care of them *qua* guitar parts. And even if the constitutive

relation is very tight, it also matters how I feel about that relation. Consider this example: Thomas, being a tenured faculty member of the philosophy department at X-University, is a constituent of the department. Tim, a philosopher at some other school, is looking for a new job, and really wants to work with Thomas. But just because Tim wants to work with Thomas does not mean that he, *ipso facto,* wants to work with the rest of the philosophy department at X-U. And vice versa, of course. Just because he wants to get that job at X-U does not mean, *ipso facto,* that he relishes the chance to work with Thomas.

Now, in perfect friendship, friends obviously don't feel that way. No friend, if he is a friend, laments the fact that by helping his friend he thereby helps himself, and that by helping himself he thereby helps his friend. Yet questions still remain, for it seems that the constitutive solution has merely given us the following: It seems that I either take as my main aim my own good, or the good of my friend, and in each case it is *ipso facto* true of me that I aim at the other end, *but only from a third person perspective.* That is, my intention may be for either my own good or the good of my friend, and then because of the constitutive relation between the two, it will always be true of me - but only from an outside perspective - that I aim at the other. Interestingly, this idea was one of the key ideas of unintentional self-love. C3) of unintentional self-love stated that: "Because by helping a friend and by generally being virtuous the agent does attain something good for himself, he can be said to act for the sake of his own happiness from an outside perspective. It is only in this third-person-perspective sense that he acts for the sake of his own happiness." The constitutive solution needs to give us more than this. The agent, when aiming at the good of his friend, *must* have both the thought that he is doing

it because it is his friend, and that he is doing it because it is a part of his good. The constitutive relation between his friend's good and his own must explain the necessity of having *both* thoughts cause the action.

4.2. The Hand Analogy

Aristotle has just the sort of thing that may be of assistance here. Consider this analogy: On Aristotle's view, a hand would not be a hand if detached from a body. Since a hand is *essentially* part of a body, since what it is to be a hand is to be a part of a body, to care for one's hand for itself – *for what it is* – is just to care for it insofar as it is a part of a body. So to aim at the good of one's hand for its own sake is, *ipso facto,* to aim at the good of one's body (not merely from a third person perspective). A person could care for his hand under some other guise, I suppose. Someone with a strange sort of hand-fetish could care for his hand *qua* beautiful aesthetic appendage. But in Aristotle's language, such a person would not be caring for his hand *insofar as it is a hand.* Such a person would therefore not be caring for his hand for itself – for what it is. Suppose someone broke his hand and went to the doctor to get it fixed, and we asked him: Why are you getting your hand fixed? What do you really care about more, your hand or your body? Such a question would be misplaced, and it probably embodies some sort of category mistake. But in the example of Thomas and Tim used just a while ago, the constitutive relation between Thomas and his department at X-University is not the same. While Thomas is a member of the philosophy department, and so in some sense a constituent part of it, this is *not* what Thomas is essentially. Thomas detached from his department would still be Thomas, and so Tim can certainly aim at Thomas'

good for itself without thereby also intending to do something good for the department. There is more to Thomas the individual and his life than being a philosopher at X-University. Unlike a hand and the body of which it is a part, Thomas is not defined by his constitutive relation to his department.

What the hand analogy shows is that the only way to care for a hand for its own sake is to care for it *for what it essentially is.* And what a hand is essentially is a part of a body. And this, finally, is our new meaning of what it means to value X for its own sake – for itself. It means to value X for what X essentially is. Does Aristotle hold this view? We saw in the first section, in fact, that he does. Consider once again how he contrasted character friendship with the lesser forms of friendship:

> Hence, those who love on account of usefulness, love on account of what is good for themselves; and those who love on account of pleasure, love on account of what is pleasant to themselves – and not in so far as the beloved is [what he is] (οὐχ ᾗ ὁ φιλούμενός ἐστιν), but rather in so far as he is useful or pleasant (*NE* VIII.3 1156a10-16).

In a friendship of pleasure or utility, a friend is not loved for "what he is", but for something else. This is why Aristotle calls these friendships "accidental": "Hence, these friendships are so by accident (κατὰ συμβεβηκός), because it is not as being the man that he is that the beloved is loved, but rather in so far as he provides something" (*NE* VIII.3 1156a16-18). There would seem to be an essentialist claim lurking in this passage. What a friend is, *qua friend,* is not something instrumentally beneficial. A friend is rather something else. But what? Aristotle closely associates "what he is" with his character, but how exactly does that help here? On the constitutive solution, it would seem that a friend must be, or at least his happiness must be, essentially, a constituent part of one's

own happiness, just like a hand is essentially part of a body. And it is this fact that gets the constitutive solution into trouble.

4.3. The Moral Objection

While something like the hand analogy might provide for an adequate answer to Q1 with respect to friendship, unfortunately I do not think that it does so in a way that provides for an answer in the affirmative to Q2. Is it objectionable to aim at the good of a friend as an essential constituent part of one's own good, acknowledging the difference between that and aiming at his good as a means to one's own? I think it is objectionable for the following reason. The hand analogy does not seem to carry over to the case of friendship - for while my friend's well-being may happen to be a part of my own, this is *not* what my friend's well-being is essentially. Even if his good were detached from its constitutive relation to mine, he would still be who he is, presumably; he would still be a separate being unto himself. It would not be like the hand case, where the hand literally loses its essence – literally ceases to be – once it is detached from the body.

In addition, a good friend seems to be one who values his friend not just because it is a way of valuing himself, even if he aims at his friend's good as a constituent of and not as a means to his own. The standard meaning of valuing someone for his own sake seems, at any rate, more morally acceptable. And understanding the "other self" claim in the way required by the constitutive solution seems to invite an unwelcome sort of narcissism into friendship that is strongly at odds with how it seems friends ought to care for one another. Interestingly, some proponents of the constitutive solution lament it for this very reason. Thus, Milgram writes of what he believes to be Aristotle's view: "It

seems to me that self-love is playing too great, and the wrong kind of, a role. As Robert Frost puts it in his poem, 'Hyla Brook': 'We love the things we love for what they are' – not for what we have made them" (1987, 376). The point is - if I love my friend only because and to the extent that I see myself in him, or only to the extent that he instantiates me in some way, then I'm not really loving him; I'm loving me.[101]

Despite those reservations, the constitutive solution has the best textual support of the three. To be clear, I am *not* saying that we shouldn't attribute the constitutive solution to Aristotle because of its troubling implication. Is Aristotle simply stuck with this objection, then? I think not. I shall explain why in the next chapter.

5. Conclusion

I have tried to do the following in this chapter. By showing up the fatal difficulties with the unintentional self-love interpretation, I intended to show just how pressing the problem we are dealing with is, both as a textual and philosophical matter. The facts are that Aristotle endorses both motives, and claims that the motive to love a friend for the friend's sake is a necessary condition on the best kind of friendship. We are not yet in possession of an account of the virtuous agent's structure of motivation that adequately diffuses the conceptual and moral worries at hand. On the constitutive solution, the attitude I take towards my friend does appear to be morally objectionable. Yet I believe that the constitutive solution is basically right as an interpretation of Aristotle, and I think a compelling response on his behalf can be given to the moral objection.

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[101] Cf. Nussbaum, echoing the sentiments of Annas and Whiting: "The object of *philia* must be seen as a being with a separate good, not as simply a possession or extension of the *philos*; and the real *philos* will wish the other well for the sake of that separate good" (1986, 355).

What we need is a better account of the relation between two individuals who have a friendship based on character, and a better interpretation of the other-self claim. In short, we need to know what Aristotle thinks two people who are friends *are,* insofar as they are friends. Why is this an important question? It is important because Aristotle holds that to value a friend for his own sake is to value him for *what he is.* The reason I think Aristotle tries so hard to conceive of friends as other selves, as sorts of replicas of each other, is in order to try and overcome the recalcitrant "otherness" that friendship presents. At *NE* IX.8 1168b7, Aristotle endorses the proverb that friends are a "single soul" (μία ψυχή). This is, I think, what he wants to be true. He wants it to be true that friends are a kind of unity, in order to do away with the "otherness" that his eudaimonism seems unable to properly accommodate. That he has the resources to do this, and that it is a view worthy of endorsement, is what I plan to show in the next chapter. Aristotle, I will argue, is able to answer the objection raised against the constitutive solution. That is, he has an argument for why it is *not* morally objectionable to aim at the good of one's friend in the way required by the constitutive solution. But his ultimate view is also importantly different from that solution and improves upon it.

III

The Single-Soul of Friendship

> In the friendship I speak of, our souls mingle and blend with each other so completely that they efface the seam that joined them, and cannot find it again. If you press me to tell why I loved him, I feel that this cannot be expressed, except by answering: Because it was he, because it was I.
>
> – Montaigne, "Of Friendship"

1. Introduction

The main question to be raised in this chapter is: What is it, according to Aristotle, for two people to be friends to each other? Insofar as two people are friends, what are they exactly? His ultimate answer to that question is, in short, that true friends are a single soul (μία ψυχή). This is a provocative idea, and one bound to strike us modern readers as obscure and metaphorical at best, plainly false at worst. After all, friendship by definition is between two distinct individuals. Yet the idea is one that Aristotle endorses in both of his ethical treatises.[102] As well, Diogenes Laertius reports of Aristotle that: "To the query, 'What is a friend?' his reply was, 'A single soul dwelling in two bodies'" (D.L. 5.20). Diogenes' testimony shows something important, for it shows that Aristotle did not lose sight of the obvious – namely, that friends are numerically distinct ('*two bodies*'). Yet he doesn't think that numerical distinctness precludes the existence of unity between friends. Aristotle does not make the claim that friends are a single-soul haphazardly, as merely a metaphorical way of claiming that friends are really close to each other. The claim has more substance than that. In fact, a

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[102] He speaks of friends as a single soul at *EE* 1240a36-1240b9 and at *NE* IX.8 1168b7.

proper understanding of that claim yields Aristotle's solution to the problem of motivation as it arises in the case of friendship.

The chapter proceeds as follows: Section 2 develops Aristotle's view that friends are a singe soul. The view, I argue, comes by way of three key Aristotelian concepts. The first is *nous,* the "thinking part" of the soul. The second and third respectively are shared perception (συναισθάνεσθαι) and shared living (τὸ συζῆν) – two things that Aristotle considers to be most important features of the best kind of friendship. Section 3 shows how the single soul view solves the problem of motivation and defends the view against objections. In short, that solution is as follows: To the extent that friends are a unity, the unity prevents a distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding motives with respect to the friends themselves in relation to each other. To the extent that friends are a single soul, it is not the case that I act on behalf of my friend, or that he acts on behalf of me. Rather, it is the single soul that acts on behalf of itself. I conclude in section 4 with a discussion of the merits of Aristotle's resolution of the *aporia* regarding self-sufficiency and friendship, in light of the single-soul view.

2. The Single Soul

2.1. *Nous*

Nous – one's intellect or mind – is the capacity of the soul responsible for reasoning and thinking.[103] The two most central points that I argue for in this sub-section are that (1) Aristotle identifies the self with *nous* in *NE* IX.4 and IX.9, and that (2) this *nous* is the same entity as the passive cognitive *nous* of *De Anima* III.4, and so the self

[103] *DA* III.4 429a15-16.

that is *nous* requires others in order to become what it is.[104] Aristotle twice in the *Nicomachean* books on friendship identifies a person with his *nous.* The first occurrence is at IX.4 1166a14-19, where he makes the claim that the features of friendship are found in the virtuous person's relation to himself. The second occurrence is at IX.8 1168b32-1169a3, where Aristotle claims that the true self-lover is one who gratifies his *nous.* Here are the passages:

> For he agrees with himself and desires the same things with his entire soul. Hence, he wishes for himself both good things and things that appear to be good, and he acts (since it is characteristic of a good person to cultivate what is good) for the sake of himself (since he does so for the sake of his thinking part [τοῦ γὰρ διανοητικοῦ χάριν], which in fact each person seems to be [ὅπερ ἕκαστος εἶναι δοκεῖ]). (*NE* IX.4 1166a14-19)

> Just as a city, or any other organization, seems to be its supreme element most of all (μάλιστ' εἶναι), so also a human being – and thus someone who cherishes this and gratifies this is most of all a self-lover. And 'self-controlled' or 'lacking self-control' are applied depending upon whether the mind (τὸν νοῦν) rules or not, on the presumption that each person is this (ὡς τούτου ἑκάστου ὄντος). (*NE* IX.8 1168b32-1169a3)

These two passages ought to make us ask what exactly the relation is, according to Aristotle, between *nous* and "the thinking part" (τὸ διανοητικόν). Is Aristotle saying that a person is his dianoetic part, which is his *nous*? Or is the dianoetic part just a part of *nous,* so that even in the second passage he is not identifying a person with his *nous,* but only with a part of it? We should read Aristotle as making the first claim – that a person is his dianoetic part, which *is* his *nous.* *De Anima* III.4 is helpful in this respect, for in that chapter Aristotle tells us straightforwardly what he means by *nous*.

2.1.1. Parts of *Nous*?

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[104] I am aware that *NE* X.7-8 presents special exegetical and philosophical difficulties. I discuss these difficulties in section 2.1.4.

Nous is described as the part of the soul by which the soul performs various cognitive functions. Consider the following two passages:

> Concerning the part of the soul by which the soul knows and reasons practically (ᾧ γινώσκει τε ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ φρονεῖ), whether it is separable from the others in definition only, or spatially as well, we have to inquire what differentiates this part, and how thinking can take place (καὶ πῶς ποτὲ γίνεται τὸ νοεῖν).[105]

> "By *nous* I mean that by which the soul thinks and judges (λέγω δὲ νοῦν ᾧ διανοεῖται καὶ ὑπολαμβάνει ἡ ψυχή)."[106]

As we see in these passages, Aristotle thinks of *nous* as that part of the soul that performs the functions described by the following verbs: γιγνώσκειν, φρονεῖν, νοεῖν, διανοεῖσθαι, and ὑπολαμβάνειν. Now, it would be wrong to think that each of those verbs signifies a different part of *nous* itself – that *nous* has a *gignosketic, phronetic, noetic, dianoetic,* and *hupolambanetic* part. The mental functions denoted by each of those verbs are too similar for that to be true, and he does not use those verbs in ways that suggest that they are the proper functions of distinct noetic parts. So when Aristotle says in IX.4 that a person is his *dianoetic* part, we should not read him as meaning to exclude the other mental functions of *nous.*[107] Doing so would create many unnecessary problems, the biggest of which resulting from the fact that there is a clear reference to the mind's capacity for *practical* reasoning linked with ethical virtue in the IX.8 passage

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[105] *DA* III.4 429a 10-14. J.A. Smith's translation, amended (Smith, for some reason, leaves φρονεῖ entirely unaccounted for).

[106] *DA* III.4 429a23.

[107] Also, in *NE* VI.2 Aristotle says that *nous* is one of three capacities of the soul that control action and truth. (The other two are sense perception and desire.) *Nous'* job in the practical sphere is to see truth regarding what the right thing to do is, and in addition to get desire to agree with it (*NE* VI.2 1139a27-30; there is an obvious similarity here to Plato's ideal of psychic harmony in *Republic* IV). I will discuss *NE* VI.2 in greater detail shortly.

above.[108] He claims there that whether we call someone continent or incontinent depends on whether *nous* rules in that person. Though he does not mention *phronêsis* by name, Aristotle clearly has it in mind. But if we read the IX.4 passage as identifying a person with the *dianoetic* part of his *nous* at the exclusion of the other parts of *nous* (like the *phronetic* part), we would then have to read the IX.8 passage in the same way, which would make the reference to continence and incontinence make very little sense. It is, therefore, better to think of *nous* as one part of the soul that performs all of the mental functions above, so that the "thinking part" is the same as the "knowing part", which is the same as the "judging part", which is the same as the part that reasons practically (φρονεῖν), etc.

2.1.2. *Nous* as "What One is Most of All"

Several features of the IX.8 passage merit further attention, and I want to now focus more on that passage and draw out its implications. It will be helpful to make that passage (1168b31-1169a3) front and center once more, this time divided into sections for clarity and with the Greek alongside in its entirety:

> **I.** ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ πόλις τὸ κυριώτατον μάλιστ' εἶναι δοκεῖ καὶ πᾶν ἄλλο σύστημα, οὕτω καὶ ἄνθρωπος· καὶ φίλαυτος δὴ μάλιστα ὁ τοῦτο ἀγαπῶν καὶ τούτῳ χαριζόμενος. Just as a city, or any other organization, seems to be its supreme element most of all, so also a human being – and thus someone who cherishes this and gratifies this is most of all a self-lover.
>
> **II.** καὶ ἐγκρατὴς δὲ καὶ ἀκρατὴς λέγεται τῷ κρατεῖν τὸν νοῦν ἢ μή, ὡς τούτου ἑκάστου ὄντος· καὶ πεπραγέναι δοκοῦσιν αὐτοὶ καὶ ἑκουσίως τὰ μετὰ λόγου μάλιστα. And 'self-controlled' or 'lacking self-control' are applied depending upon whether the mind rules or not, on the presumption that each person is this. And people seem *themselves* to do, and to do voluntarily, most of all those actions that involve reason.

[108] See Stern-Gillet (1995, 25-6), Price (1990, 107), and Gill (2006, 8).

> **III.** ὅτι μὲν οὖν τοῦθ' ἕκαστός ἐστιν ἢ μάλιστα, οὐκ ἄδηλον, καὶ ὅτι ὁ ἐπιεικὴς μάλιστα τοῦτ' ἀγαπᾷ. διὸ φίλαυτος μάλιστ' ἂν εἴη... Well then, that each person is this, or is this most of all, is not unclear, and also that a good person cherishes this most of all. This is why he would be most of all a self-lover...

The first thing to note is that the IX.8 passage sheds important light on just what Aristotle means by *autos* – self. Simply put, IX.8 establishes that Aristotle thinks that one's self is one's ruling part, and that one's ruling part is one's *nous.*[109] One's self is one's *nous.* After all, what makes someone a *philautos* (a self-lover) is the fact that he gratifies his *nous,* since *nous* is "what one is", or what one is "most of all". *Autos* and *nous,* then, are clearly brought together in IX.8.

Now, as simple as I made the previous point about *autos* and *nous* seem to be, there is a problem with which I must contend. The problem concerns the status of the "ruling part" in akratic and vicious people. In an akratic person, for instance, the appetitive part rules. Does this mean that an akratic person *is* his appetitive part, and that he is just as much of a self-lover as a virtuous person whose *nous* rules him? If not, then is the akratic or vicious person "self-less", as it were? The answer to the first question cannot be 'yes', for Aristotle says clearly that the virtuous person's self-love is superior to the self-love of the base. However, Aristotle *is* still willing to call base people "self-lovers"[110], so we cannot attribute to Aristotle the view that base people have no self.[111]

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[109] Or, *nous* is what the self is "most of all" (μάλιστ' εἶναι). I will soon discuss the problems that this qualifier presents. Also, it should be noted that the IX.4 passage probably establishes this claim too, though I think it is more explicit in the IX.8 passage.

[110] He attributes a kind of self-love (i.e. a base kind) to certain people (i.e. base people) at *NE* IX.8 1168b11-28.

[111] *Pace* Stern-Gillet (1995, 29). On her view, akratic and vicious people are not selves. I depart from her account here, but I am not sure to what extent my dispute with her is merely verbal. I think that the correct thing to say about a base person is not that he lacks a self altogether, but that he has an inferior self. I rest

His view rather seems to be that base people *are* self-lovers, but in a very bad kind of way. It would be wrong to attribute the view to Aristotle that vicious and akratic people are not self-lovers at all, and that only the virtuous are self-lovers. He never says this. What he does say is that a virtuous person is *more of a self-lover* than the base person: δόξειε δ' ἂν ὁ τοιοῦτος μᾶλλον εἶναι φίλαυτος.

So, we cannot read Aristotle as claiming that base people are not selves at all. However, we also cannot just say that Aristotle's view is that the self is whatever happens to be the ruling part in a person, because he clearly thinks that *nous* has a greater claim to being "what someone is" than the appetites have. Rather, I think there is a strong case to be made that Aristotle thinks that selfhood comes in degrees, and that the virtuous person is *more of a self* than a base person. At least two considerations count strongly in favor of this claim: 1) He thinks that a person *is* his ruling part, but he also thinks that in a human being it is *nous* that *ought* to rule. 2) He thinks that a virtuous person is more of a self-lover than a base person (*NE* IX.8 1168b29). This is strong textual evidence in support of the claim that Aristotle thinks that there can be degrees of selfhood because it is a case of Aristotle applying the word μάλλον to αὐτός. The virtuous person is more of a *self*-lover (φίλαυτος) than the base person because he is more of a self (in that he gratifies that part of him that he is most of all). For further confirmation of this, we must examine another problem raised by the IX.8 passage currently under examination.

What does Aristotle mean when he says that, just like a city, a person seems most of all (μάλιστ' εἶναι) to be his ruling part (τὸ κυριώτατον)? The problem is that Aristotle's use of the phrase μάλιστ' εἶναι δοκεῖ (...seems to be most of all...) is

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this claim very much on Aristotle's claim that a virtuous person is *more of a self-lover* than a base person. He never says that a base person is not a self-lover at all, a point Stern-Gillet does not seem to recognize. How can Aristotle say that the base person is a self-lover if he has no self?

ambiguous. Here are two possible meanings of the claim that someone seems to be most of all his ruling part:

> M1: Most of all, it seems that a person is his ruling part. In other words, what the evidence suggests more than anything else is that a person is his ruling part and nothing else.
>
> M2: It seems that a person is most of all his ruling part. In other words, the evidence suggests that a person is his ruling part more than he is any other part.

M1 identifies the self with the ruling part at the exclusion of other parts of the soul, while M2 does not. Aristotle is not clear about which of these is the right one, as he seems to hedge between both of them: ὅτι μὲν οὖν τοῦθ' ἕκαστός ἐστιν ἢ μάλιστα... Each person is his ruling part, Aristotle thinks. *Or* each person is his ruling part *most of all* (ἢ μάλιστα), he thinks.

Unclear on this point as Aristotle may be, I think that M2, and not M1, accurately describes the meaning of Aristotle's claim. Aristotle cannot mean to (at least, he *should not* mean to) identify the self with one's *nous* at the exclusion of the other parts of the soul. It is part of our nature as humans, Aristotle thinks, to be both rational and appetitive. The ethical ideal is for a person to habituate himself and achieve that state of soul in which his appetites not only obey his reason, but also agree with his reason (*NE* I.13 1102b14-35). This is why the good person is described in the IX.4 passage as someone who "agrees with himself" and "desires the same things with his *entire soul*" (1166a14-19; my emphasis). So, while the self may be *mostly nous* in that it is *nous* that ought to rule, the appetitive part of the soul does have some claim to be part of what constitutes the self. That Aristotle thinks this is also made clear by the fact that he draws a strong evaluative distinction between the virtuous person and the merely continent

person. The continent person is almost there – his *nous* rules, but his appetites do not yet fully agree with his *nous* and have to be fought off to some extent. He is a self, but not as much of a self as the virtuous person. In order to become a self in the fullest sense, he must get the non-rational part of his soul to agree with his rational part.[112] If Aristotle had intended to identify the self with one's *nous* at the exclusion of the other parts of the soul, then he should not have claimed that the virtuous person was ethically superior to the continent person.

2.1.3. The "Plasticity" of *Nous*[113]

I want now to turn to *De Anima* III.4, for what is found in that chapter, when combined with what has already been established about *nous*, has profound implications for friendship. Having distinguished the five senses, Aristotle asks in III.4 how thinking (τὸ νοεῖν, literally '*nous-ing*') differs from perceiving (τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι). Thinking and perceiving are alike in one important respect, namely that just as sense organs take on the form of their objects, *nous* becomes that which it thinks (*DA* III.4 429a12-18).[114] But thinking differs from sensing in that everything is a possible object of thought, whereas not everything is a possible object of hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, and feeling. That is, one cannot see sounds, or taste sights, or smell touches. But everything is a possible object of thought. This is why, on Aristotle's view, *nous* is not located in any physical

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[112] And so, Stern-Gillet is surely right when she says that "self" is an "achievement word" for Aristotle (1995, 29).

[113] I borrow this phrase from Stern-Gillet (1995, 49).

[114] "Thinking" is somewhat of an unhappy translation of *nous* for me. This will become clear later in the chapter. I don't know of any English word, however, that fully captures what Aristotle means by *nous-ing*, as it were.

organ, which gives it "the plasticity required to think *all* things." Unlike the sense organs, *nous* is pure potentiality and so cannot be anything prior to exercising its specific function.[115]

> It follows that it can have no nature of its own, other than that of having a certain capacity. Thus that in the soul which is called thought (by which I mean that whereby the soul thinks and judges) is, before it thinks, not actually any real thing. For this reason it cannot reasonably be regarded as blended with the body: if so, it would acquire some quality, e.g. warmth or cold, or even have an organ like the sensitive faculty: as it is, it has none. It was a good idea to call the soul 'the place of forms', though this description holds only of the thinking soul, and even this is the forms only potentially, not actually. (*DA* III.4 429a20-29)

This passage licenses the inference that, as aptly noted by Stern-Gillet,[116] it is only through individual acts of intellection that *nous* can overcome its purely potential state. *Nous* can only actualize itself by becoming something else."[117]

It has been pointed out that Aristotle lacks a conception of the self, one commonly attributed to Descartes, according to which the self is the ultimate datum of experience, an object directly knowable through introspection.[118] Catherine Osborne, very much in the spirit of Stern-Gillet's remarks, has claimed that for Aristotle, the very idea of

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[115] Stern-Gillet (1995, 49). See also Polansky (2007, 435) and Hamlyn (1993, 136) who apply the same reasoning to explain why *nous* is not located in any physical organ, which it seems Aristotle himself makes fairly clear. But despite the fact that *nous* has no physical organ, Aristotle still applies the same formulae to it as he does to the other sense organs according to which a cognitive faculty is potentially what its object is actually (see Modrak 1981). As Hamlyn (1993, 135) notes, Aristotle never fully resolves the difficulties that result from applying the same formulae to *nous*. On the obscure ontological status of *nous* in this passage: Hamlyn (1993, 136) offers the suggestion that the capacity of *nous* is one of the whole man and is dependent on the other faculties that do have organs. Hartman (1977, 7) finds the characterization of *nous* to be an irredeemably week point of Aristotle's psychology, while Wedin (1986 and 1988) attempts to come to Aristotle's rescue, though he does this by a treatment of the active *nous* of III.5, as does Kahn (1992, 360). Kahn does not so much try to explain the ontology of *nous* as he does attempt to reconcile the existence of *nous* with Aristotle's conception of the soul as the form of the body.

[116] Stern-Gillet (1995, 51-2).

[117] Stern-Gillet (1995, 50).

[118] Stern-Gillet (1995, 18-24), Osborne (2009, 356-62).

"knowing oneself" is problematic, "since the self in Aristotle is actualized only in the form of its thoughts and experiences, and not as a subject independent of the objects of attention" (2009, 349). The *De Anima* passages examined thus far, in which we learn that *nous* is pure potentiality and must *become,* in Aristotle's words, something else in order to become what it actually is, support Osborne's view: The self is not, in principle, the sort of thing that could be an object of awareness, since the only way for the self to become actual and determinate is for it to take on the form of a determinate object.[119] And once this process is complete, there are not two separate things – the self and the object – but a single actuality constituted by the intellection of the object.[120]

Everything that has been said about *nous* so far has important implications for friendship. But at this point, any ethical imports I might draw from the foregoing would depend on the claim that the *nous* of *NE* IX.4 & 8 is the same entity as the *nous* of *DA* III.4. Rather than simply assume that claim, I argue for it in the next sub-section.

2.1.4. Why the *Nous* of *NE* IX.4 & 8 is the Same Entity as the *Nous* of *DA* III.4

Some reasons for thinking that this is true have been rehearsed early in this section. We noted earlier that in *DA* III.4 Aristotle thinks of *nous* as that part of the soul that performs the functions described by the following verbs: γιγνώσκειν, φρονεῖν, νοεῖν, διανοεῖσθαι, and ὑπολαμβάνειν. Furthermore, it was argued that when Aristotle

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[119] Osborne (2009, 358). Cf. Kosman (2004, 142-145).

[120] "To perceive that one sees is not to perceive an *act* of seeing, or to perceive a *self* doing some seeing, or anything like that: it is to perceive *the object of sight,* the whiteness, the largeness, actualized at the time of seeing. It is for this reason that Aristotle always speaks of 'seeing' that one sees, for what one sees is not a self but the seen object actualized as seen. So it is not that we are aware *both* of ourselves *and* of the object of attention, as though subject and object were two separate things, for the actuality of subject and object are just the same thing. There is no such thing as awareness of oneself that is not constituted by *awareness of what we are aware of*" (Osborne 2009, 358-59).

says that a person is his *dianoetic* part in *NE* IX.4, we should read him as saying that a person is his *dianoetic* part – and that this part is his *nous*. And the use of the verb φρονεῖν in the first sentence of *DA* III.4 evokes practical wisdom, so we have plenty of reason to think that the ethical *nous* of *NE* IX.4 & 8 is the same entity as the passive cognitive *nous* of *DA* III.4. The ethical *nous* performs the same functions as the cognitive *nous*. The moral agent has to think, judge, and know as he goes about life and assesses his particular circumstances, trying to discover what right action is in any given situation. What *in addition* has to happen in the ethical sphere is that this knowing, thinking, and judging part rules in the soul.

One aspect of Aristotle's ethics and psychology that might make us doubt that each *nous* is the same entity is the fact that in X.7-8 of the *NE* he seems to identify a person with a purely cognitive *nous* at the exclusion of anything ethical. This would seem to be a problem for my argument, for so far I have argued that Aristotle thinks that one's self is one's ruling part and that *nous* ought to rule, so that *nous* is the self in the highest sense and is, in fact, the self of the virtuous person. Furthermore, I have argued that Aristotle does not mean to identify the self with *nous* at the exclusion of the appetitive parts of the soul. Yet in *NE* X.7-8, Aristotle seems to do exactly that – identify the self with *nous* at the exclusion of the other parts of the soul. In addition, he seems to mean something very different by *nous* than what he means by it in IX.4 and IX.8. In extolling the life of theoretical virtue in preference to the life of practical virtue, he claims that the activity of *nous* (ἡ δὲ τοῦ νοῦ ἐνέργεια) is superior in excellence because it is the activity of study (θεωρητικὴ οὖσα) (*NE* X.7 1177b219-20). Furthermore, he claims that

the life in accordance with this *nous* is superior to the practical life because it contains something divine:

> εἰ δὴ θεῖον ὁ νοῦς πρὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ ὁ κατὰ τοῦτον βίος θεῖος πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον. Hence if *nous* is something divine in comparison with a human being, so also will the life in accord with understanding be divine in comparison with human life.

He elaborates on this in X.8. The virtues of character, he reminds us, are tied up with feelings, and are the virtues that belong to a person insofar as he is a compound (τὸ σύνθετον) of reason and desire. The virtue of *nous,* however, is separated from the compound (ἡ δὲ τοῦ νοῦ κεχωρισμένη). This seems to be a very different *nous* from the one linked with virtue of character in IX.4 and IX.8.

This problem raises a host of exegetical difficulties that have exercised many scholars for quite some time, and invites us to consider (among other things) whether Aristotle thinks that the best life is the practical life or the contemplative life.[121] This problem is very far from being resolved, and to fully resolve it is more than I can do here. But fortunately, my argument does not depend on whether this problem can be solved. For whether or not Aristotle thinks, in the end, that one should embrace the theoretical life at the expense of everything practical and distinctively human (the theoretical life is, after all, divine), it is either way the case that the *nous* spoken of in practical contexts is the same entity as the *nous* of *DA* III.4. Indeed, even the *nous* that he speaks of in Book

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[121] See Ackrill (1980), Devereaux (1981), Keyt (1983), Whiting (1986), Roche (1988), Keyt (1989), Kraut (1989), White (1990), Crisp (1994), Cooper (1975, 168-80), Cooper (1999), Lear (2004), and Van Cleemput (2006). There is a similar problem found in the *De Anima* that results from Aristotle's positing of the active *nous* in III.5. This *nous* is said to be is pure actuality, spatially separable from the rest of a person, impassible and unmixed with anything physical, and furthermore immortal and eternal. This raises the problem of how to reconcile the existence of an active, impersonal and immoral *nous* with Aristotle's *entelexeia* conception of soul according to which the soul is the life principle of the body and cannot outlive the body's death.

X of the *NE* is the same entity as the *nous* he speaks of in these other contexts. To make this argument, I turn briefly to *NE* VI.2

NE VI.2 is about the capacities of the soul that control action and truth. There are three: sense perception (αἴσθησις), desire (ὄρεξις), and *nous*. Aristotle goes on in this chapter to refer to *nous* as the *dianoetic* part. 1139a22-31 is a telling passage. In it Aristotle distinguishes the function of the *dianoetic* part when it comes to action, and the function of that part when it comes to study.

> τῆς δὲ θεωρητικῆς διανοίας καὶ μὴ πρακτικῆς μηδὲ ποιητικῆς τὸ εὖ καὶ κακῶς τἀληθές ἐστι καὶ ψεῦδος (τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι παντὸς διανοητικοῦ ἔργον)· τοῦ δὲ πρακτικοῦ καὶ διανοητικοῦ ἀλήθεια ὁμολόγως ἔχουσα τῇ ὀρέξει τῇ ὀρθῇ.
>
> The thought concerned with study, not with action or production, has its good or bad state in being true or false; for truth is the function of every *dianoetic* part. But the function of the *dianoetic* part concerned with action is truth agreeing with correct desire.[122]

There are two ways we might read this passage. On the one hand, we might think that Aristotle is distinguishing between two different *dianoetic* parts, and so between two different kinds of *nous* – one theoretical, and one practical. On the other hand, we might think that Aristotle is distinguishing between two different spheres of life – one theoretical and one practical – in which the *dianoetic* part (*nous*) has an important role to play.

It is in the second way that we should read the passage. Whether engaged in theoretical or practical life, *nous* is always doing basically the same thing: *thinking, reasoning, searching for truth.*[123] If it is engaged in theoretical pursuits, it will be

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[122] My translation.

[123] *Pace* Kahn (1992, 360) who argues that we should distinguish between "our noetic faculty as such" and "our concrete acts of human thinking". He does this in an attempt to reconcile Aristotle's positing of a

reasoning about things like differential calculus and the metaphysical principles of the universe. If it is engaged in practical pursuits, it will be reasoning about things like whether to trade with this or that country, or whether to go to war, or whether to drink that third beer at the bar.[124] Either way, its job is to think. It is true that in Book X, Aristotle seems to say that the best kind of life is one in which one's *nous* is immersed almost entirely in theoretical pursuits. But this should not be read as a preference for one kind of *nous* over another kind of *nous*, but rather as a preference for one sphere in which *nous* can flourish over another sphere in which the same *nous* can flourish.[125] Book X, therefore, need not present any special problems for my argument.[126]

2.1.5. From *Nous* to Friendship

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separable active *nous* with his *entelecheia* conception of soul, according to which the soul is the form of the body. He admits, however, that the only place in which Aristotle makes this alleged distinction even remotely explicit is in "the extreme case of the disembodied *nous* in III.3".

[124] My line of thought here has an affinity to the argument that Lear (2004) makes for how the practical life approximates the theoretical life in that it too involves the excellent use of one's reason.

[125] Further confirmation of this may be found at X.7 1178a2-3, where Aristotle again says that a person is his *nous* since a person is his controlling part (*to kurion*, the positive version of the superlative he used in IX.8). While he does claim at X.8 1178a23-24 that *nous* is separable from the compound, he nevertheless does not specify whether he means separable spatially or separable in definition only.

[126] There is, of course, a *nous* that appears to be entirely out of left field, namely the one found in the notoriously cryptic *DA* III.5. In that chapter, Aristotle says that there is an active *nous,* which is pure actuality. It is also spatially separable, impassible and unmixed with anything physical, and furthermore immortal and eternal (unlike the *nous* of III.4, which is "perishable"). It is somehow causally responsible for the thinking of each of us without being essentially identified by its relationship with us. This has made some, like Ross (1923, 151), say that the active *nous* "goes beyond the individual" and is "identical in all individuals". Some have argued that this active *nous* is the *nous* that Aristotle extols in *NE* X (e.g. Stern Gillet 1995, 34; Hardie 1980, 71; Cooper 1975, 157), but I find this hard to believe. In *NE* X, even though Aristotle thinks there is something divine about contemplating, he still claims that *nous* is a fundamentally human thing (1178a8-9). Though he waxes poetic about striving to be like the immortals, he never actually claims that *nous* is immortal. Whereas in *DA* III.5, the active *nous* is explicitly said to be immortal while the passive *nous* is said to be perishable. Whatever the active *nous* is, it isn't human. Some, like Clark (1975, V.3) have even argued that the active *nous* is the unmoved mover.

We may now draw a crucial ethical import from all that has been said so far about *nous:* The self as *nous* is the sort of thing that requires others in order to actualize and become aware of itself.[127] *DA* III.4 of course does not say that those others need to be friends, but friendship still presents a very interesting question: What happens when those others are friends? The *Nicomachean Ethics* answers this question in two places: IX.7, and especially in IX.9. Aristotle's claim at *DA* 429a25 that *nous* is not actually any real thing before it thinks is closely paralleled by certain claims in *NE* IX.7 and IX.9: "It is by our actuality that we exist, since we exist by living and acting" (*NE* IX.7 1168a6-8); and "living seems to be strictly perceiving and thinking" (*NE* IX.9 1170a19). That these claims occur in the context of the value of friendship is no coincidence. Aristotle is claiming that friendship has a crucial role to play in self-actualization. This gets argued for at length in IX.9, and to a somewhat lesser extent in IX.7. Let us take a closer look, then, at these passages, beginning with IX.9. Aristotle *is* trying to highlight friendship's role in facilitating self-actualization, and as we shall see, he is doing it in a way that solves the problem of motivation.

2.2. *Noetic* Friendship

The primary concern of *Nicomachean Ethics* IX.9 is the puzzle (*aporia*) regarding self-sufficiency and friendship – the question of whether the happy person will need friends or not. At 1170a13-b13, Aristotle offers a long and rich argument for why the

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[127] It is hard to say how this applies to a base person, since a base person is a self but not a *nous.* I've argued that Aristotle's view is that a base person is an inferior self because his *nous* does not rule in his soul. But he still has a *nous,* and so he still has a part that represents his superior self. Also, the *nous* of a base person can still perform its cognitive functions (like receiving the form of a perceptible object) without ruling in the soul in the way necessary for ethical virtue. So, it is possible that a base person is still of such a nature that he requires others in order to actualize and become aware of himself (just like the virtuous person, whose *nous* rules).

happy person will need friends. I call this argument 'the argument from nature' since Aristotle claims that it is "more suited to nature" (φυσικώτερον) and that it shows that a good friend is "by nature" (τῇ φύσει) worth choosing for the good person (1170a13-15). Commentators have not been sufficiently puzzled by this argument and usually regard it as establishing something fairly bland, for instance that friendship is by nature intrinsically good.[128] However, the argument from nature contains a number of unrecognized problems. Once we resolve these problems, we will see that this argument actually aims to establish the much stronger and more interesting Aristotelian thesis that true friends are a "single soul" (μία ψυχή).[129]

2.2.1. Higher-Order Perception and Aristotle's Use of '*Sunaisthanesthai*' in IX.9

> But to those who look upon this in a manner more suited to nature (φυσικώτερον), it looks as though a good friend is by nature (τῇ φύσει) worth choosing for a good person. For, as we have said, what is good by nature is, for a good person, good and pleasant in its own right. (*NE* IX.9 1170a13-16)

The argument from nature proceeds as follows:[130] Aristotle first notes that living, for human beings, is a power of perception or of thought, and that powers refer back to their activities. Therefore, for a human being, living refers chiefly to perceiving or thinking (1170a19), i.e. human living consists chiefly in first-order perceiving (or thinking). In the next piece of text, 1170a20-26, Aristotle argues that living itself is good

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[128] E.g. Kraut (1989, ch. 2.16, esp. page 141), and Whiting (2006, 294-297).

[129] Later in section 4 I shall consider the merits of Aristotle's resolution of the *aporia* regarding self-sufficiency and friendship.

[130] See Burnett (1900, 428-30), Ross (1925, commentary on 1170b19), and Gauthier (1970, 755-62) for formalizations of Aristotle's reasoning in this argument. Like Stern-Gillet (1995, 138), I concentrate almost exclusively on the argument's contents.

and pleasant in its own right (καθ' αὑτό). The reason for this is that living has "definite order" (ὡρισμένον), and what has definite order has "the nature of goodness" (τῆς τἀγαθοῦ φύσεως) (1170a21-22). Aristotle makes sure to tell us that this is a feature peculiar to the good person, and not the bad person, since the life of a bad person lacks order (1170a25).[131]

In the next part of the argument, found in a long stretch of text from 1170a26 to b3, Aristotle claims that mental acts (like perceiving) are often accompanied by higher-order mental acts (e.g. we perceive that we perceive).[132] In short, the main point that Aristotle makes in this stretch of text is that since living is good and pleasant, and since we perceive that we live, perceiving that we live is good and pleasant. Now, since living is first-order perceiving, perceiving that we live is higher-order perceiving. So, higher-order perceiving is good and pleasant because a) first-order perceiving is good and pleasant, and b) it is pleasant to perceive a good existing in oneself (the good here being first-order perceiving).

The stretch of text thus far examined yields the following premises of the argument:

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[131] ὡρισμένον, typically translated as 'definition', is difficult to translate in this context. By claiming that the good person's life is ὡρισμένον, Aristotle is directing our attention to the fact that the virtuous person's soul is fully integrated, and as such, his life's choices are ordered and directed in a way that the base person's life's choices are not. The base person is chaotic, wanting one thing at one time, the opposite at another time, regretting his decisions because of their badness, etc.

[132] The claim that we perceive that we perceive is, one might say, belabored and over-emphasized in the argument, which shows however that Aristotle thinks it rather important.

> But if living itself is good and pleasant... and a seeing man perceives that he sees, a hearing man that he hears, a walking man that he walks; and in the other cases similarly there is something that is perceiving that we are active, with the consequence that we will perceive that we perceive and think that we think. But to perceive that we perceive or to think that we think is to perceive or think that we exist (since existing was perceiving or thinking); then perceiving that one lives is one sort of thing that is pleasant in its own right (since life is by nature a good thing, and to perceive a good actually existing in oneself is pleasant). (*NE* IX.9 1170a25-b3)

1) Living itself is perceiving and thinking (first-order perceiving) (1170a19).

2) Living itself is good and pleasant (1170a20).

3) Mental acts (like perceiving) are accompanied by higher order mental acts (we perceive that we perceive) (1170a29-b1).

4) We perceive that we live (which is higher-order perception). (from 1 & 3)

5) If living itself is good and pleasant, then perceiving that one lives is good and pleasant (1170a25-b3).

6) Perceiving that one lives is good and pleasant. (from 1-5)

Now I will turn to discussing the next and final stretch of text that generates the remaining premises, 1170b3-13. To make things easier, I shall separate this stretch into three parts:

> **Text A**: But living (τὸ ζῆν) is worth choosing, and especially so for good people, because existing (τὸ εἶναι) is good and pleasant for them, since they take pleasure in having a shared perception (συναισθανόμενοι) of what is good in its own right. (1170b3-6)

> **Text B**: But as a good person is related himself, so must he be also to his friend, since a friend is another self. Therefore, in just the same way that his own existing is worth choosing to each, so too is his friend's, or nearly so (καθάπερ οὖν τὸ αὐτὸν εἶναι αἱρετὸν ἐστιν ἑκάστῳ, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τὸν φίλον, ἢ παραπλησίως). But his existing was worth choosing on account of his perceiving himself as being good; and this sort of perception is pleasant in its own right (τὸ δ' εἶναι ἦν αἱρετὸν διὰ τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι αὑτοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ὄντος, ἡ δὲ τοιαύτη αἴσθησις ἡδεῖα καθ' ἑαυτήν.). (1170b3-10)

> **Text C**: Hence there must also be a shared perception of his friend, that he exists, and this would occur by their living life together and sharing in discussion and thought (συναισθάνεσθαι ἄρα δεῖ καὶ τοῦ φίλου ὅτι ἔστιν, τοῦτο δὲ γίνοιτ' ἂν ἐν τῷ συζῆν καὶ κοινωνεῖν λόγων καὶ διανοίας). (1170b10-14)

Text A marks the first time in the argument that Aristotle introduces a thesis of choiceworthiness. One crucial feature of living (τὸ ζῆν) that makes it choiceworthy for a

good person is the fact that existing (τὸ εἶναι) is good and pleasant for him.[133] What is crucial here is that all Text A claims is that living is choiceworthy on account of first-order perceiving (which is living itself) being good and pleasant. So, simply put, living is choiceworthy because it is good and pleasant.

But things change in Text B. There Aristotle reminds us of something he had claimed in *NE* IX.4 – that someone is related to his friend in the same way that he is related to himself because his friend is his other self. And so the existing, or being (*einai*) of one's friend must be choiceworthy in the same way that one's own being is choiceworthy. It is this point that leads Aristotle to advance another thesis about choiceworthiness according to which what makes one's own existing worth choosing is the pleasure found in *perceiving* oneself as good. The kind of perception being referred to here is *higher-order perception.* Perceiving myself as good amounts to perceiving that I am perceiving, since first-order perceiving – what living consists in – is good. Aristotle could have just said, "His existing was worth choosing on account of its being good," but that would have been a claim far less rich and informative. In Text B, it is not just the goodness of life that makes existing choiceworthy, but the perception of the goodness as well.[134] If we recall the long passage in which Aristotle first introduced higher-order perception, he claimed that one reason why higher-order perception (perceiving that one lives) is pleasant is that it is pleasant to "perceive a good existing in oneself" (1170b2). So, what makes existing choiceworthy is the value of higher-order perception, not *just*

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[133] Here it makes sense to read "living" (τὸ ζῆν) as synonymous with "existing" (τὸ εἶναι), for as Aristotle claims in *NE* IX.7, "It is by our actuality that we exist (ἐσμεν δ' ἐνεργείᾳ), since we exist by living and acting (τῷ ζῆν γὰρ καὶ πράττειν)" (*NE* IX.7 1168a6-8).

[134] That this is a special kind of awareness, namely higher-order awareness, is also indicated by Aristotle's use of τοιαύτη in ἡ δὲ τοιαύτη αἴσθησις ἡδεῖα καθ' ἑαυτήν.

first-order perception (as Text A had it). It is important to see that Aristotle makes this claim immediately after noting that the existence of one's friend must be choiceworthy in the same way that one's own existence is choiceworthy. Something about friendship leads Aristotle to make this new claim about choiceworthiness.

We may now add the following steps to the argument from nature:

7) A friend is another self (*allos autos*) (1170b7).

8) As the good person is related to himself, so he is related to his friend (1170b6-7). (from 7)

9) In just the same way that one's own existing is worth choosing, one's friend's existence is worth choosing (1170b7-8). (from 7-8)

10) One's own existence is worth choosing because of the pleasure found in perceiving oneself as good (1170b8-9). (from 6)

And Text C gives us the final step of the argument:[135]

11) There must (δεῖ) be a shared perception (συναισθάνεσθαι) of one's friend, that he exists, and this occurs by their living life together (συζῆν) and sharing in discussion and thought (1170b10-13). (from 7-10)

11) may seem problematic, for it may seem not to follow at all from the preceding premises. But Aristotle *does,* in fact, infer 11) from 7-10, and he is justified in his inference. I shall demonstrate this in due course, but we must now turn to the two problematic elements of the argument. Here I shall explain and motivate them, and in section II they will be fully examined and resolved. They are: 1) the appeal to the value of higher-order perception; and 2) the use of the verb συναισθάνεσθαι. The first presents

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[135] Stern-Gillet (*Aristotle's Philosophy of Friendship*, 139) calls this step an "intermediate conclusion" and considers the "final conclusion" to be Aristotle's last remark of the chapter that "anything worth choosing for a divinely happy person needs to belong to him, or else in that respect he will be in need. So then, anyone who is to be happy will need friends who are good." I will address this piece of text in Section III. Though clearly based on things established in the argument from nature, I consider it to be an entirely separate argument. What Stern-Gillet calls the intermediate conclusion above, I think is actually the final conclusion of a self-contained argument.

a philosophical difficulty because the argument from nature does not seem to need it. The long stretch of text from 1170a25-b3, in which Aristotle spends much time telling us about how we perceive that we perceive, and that there is great value in doing so, is odd. It is hard to see how this point about higher-order perception advances an argument primarily about what makes friends choiceworthy. In fact, the argument would seem to be able to succeed by appealing to the value of first-order perception all the way through. Having established that existing (first-order perceiving) is pleasant, Aristotle could have *just* said that one's own existence is choiceworthy because it is good and pleasant. Since a friend's existing is choiceworthy in the same way, it too is choiceworthy because it is good and pleasant. So why does he place such strong emphasis on higher-order perception?

The second problem presents us with an obscurity. After having established that a friend's existence is choiceworthy in the same way as one's own, and that one's own existence is choiceworthy because it is pleasant to perceive oneself as good, it would seem to follow for Aristotle that a friend's existence is choiceworthy because of how pleasant it is to perceive (αἰσθάνεσθαι) one's friend as good, and so one should perceive (αἰσθάνεσθαι) the existence of one's friend. But Aristotle does not conclude that one must perceive - αἰσθάνεσθαι - one's friend, but rather that one must συναισθάνεσθαι one's friend (1170b10-13). This use of the verb συναισθάνεσθαι is, as one scholar has noted, bizarre.[136] The prefix 'συν' presumably indicates that the word denotes a kind of

[136] See Flakne (2005, 37). I will discuss this term in detail later. I shall not make any comparisons with other uses of this verb by other authors in the effort to discern the meaning of Aristotle's use of it. That is mainly because Aristotle appears to have been the first to use this verb philosophically, and so later Greek uses of it won't be of much use in figuring out what Aristotle means by it. LSJ does not give any citations of the verb before Aristotle. I have only found, via Flakne (2005, n2), that Plutarch reports that Solon's aim in allowing citizens to pursue suits on behalf of other citizens was to engender συναισθήσις among the

sharing in perception with another person, such that two people are engaged in perceiving the same things.[137] But in the passage at hand, the *object* of the verb is one's friend (τοῦ φιλοῦ), which is why I find it significant that Aristotle chose to use συναισθάνεσθαι instead of the ordinary verb for perceiving - αἰσθάνεσθαι. But what could it mean to jointly perceive, or to co-perceive, or to have a shared perception of, one's friend? How should we understand and translate συναισθάνεσθαι as it occurs in the argument from nature?[138]

One way of explaining these obscurities is inspired by an interpretation of the relation between self-love and friendship in Aristotle that was refuted in Chapter II, namely the interpretation according to which self-love and friendship are isomorphic. As Kraut puts it, "friendship towards others 'comes from' self-love in the sense that the latter provides the paradigm case of the attitudes characteristic of the former."[139] Applying this to the argument from nature, when Aristotle says that one's own existence is choiceworthy because of how pleasant it is to perceive oneself as good (higher-order perception), and that one's friend's existence is choiceworthy in the same way, his point is simply that just as I find the perception of my own existence pleasant, I find the perception of my friend's existence pleasant. A Kraut puts it:

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populace. It is worth noting that, as Sorabji (2005 v.1, 159) notes, Plotinus and the commentators use the verb to denote self-awareness and consciousness, and that they borrowed this usage from the Stoics. See Warren (1964) for its use in Plotinus. This may be significant, for it may indicate that these later writers understood Aristotle to be talking about self-awareness with his use of the verb.

[137] It would seem to have this meaning at *EE* 1244b25 and 1245b20. I will discuss those passages later.

[138] The two problems are interrelated, so in what follows I will often move back and forth from talking about the one to talking about the other.

[139] Kraut (1989, 132). See also Pangle (2003, 228 n2), Kahn (1981, 22-23), McKerlie (1991, 90-91), Annas (1988, 1-2), Whiting (2006), and Pakaluk (1998, 166).

> The crucial implicit premise seems to be this: If a certain feature makes X desirable for someone to perceive and Y has that same feature, then Y is also desirable for him to perceive. Relying on this premise, Aristotle moves from the fact that perceiving one's own being is desirable (if one is virtuous) to the conclusion that it is also desirable to perceive the being of one's friend.[140]

This interpretation provides a possible explanation for Aristotle's appeal to the value of higher-order perception: The fact that the perception is "higher-order" is irrelevant. What matters is that a person perceives something that is good. In the case of one's own existence, the perception of oneself as good is by its very nature a higher-order perception, but it is not the fact that it is higher-order that makes it valuable. What makes it valuable is the goodness of what is being perceived, and the pleasure that comes from perceiving it. In the case of the existence of one's friend, once again there is something that is good (the existence of one's friend), and there is pleasure found in perceiving it. In this way, my friend's existence is worth choosing in the same way that my own is worth choosing – namely for the reason that they are both good, and perceiving each of them is pleasant. On this interpretation, then, there is no appeal made by Aristotle to the value of higher-order perception *qua* higher-order. He only raises the point that we perceive that we perceive because it allows him to claim that perceiving a good is pleasant, which supports his claim that my own existence and my friend's existence are choiceworthy to me in the same way (they are both good, and they are both pleasant to perceive).

Simple and straightforward as this interpretation of the argument is, there are strong reasons to doubt its viability. Aristotle is doing much more than observing a similarity between self-love and friendship, between the value of one's own existence

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[140] Kraut (1989, 141). Cf. Burnet (1900, 430: §10).

and the value of one's friend's existence. To see this, we have to look at the final step of the argument and Aristotle's use of συναισθάνεσθαι, and also what immediately precedes that step. Consider once more the two steps that immediately precede the conclusion of the argument from nature:

> 9) In just the same way that one's own existence is worth choosing, one's friend's existence is worth choosing. (1170b7-8)
>
> 10) One's own existence is worth choosing because of the pleasure found in perceiving oneself as good. (1170b8-9)

Now, these claims permit Aristotle to conclude that the existence of one's friend is choiceworthy because of the pleasure found in perceiving one's friend as good, and to use the ordinary verb αἰσθάνεσθαι for 'perceiving'. Such a conclusion appears natural, and on the Kraut-reading, this is basically all that Aristotle is trying to say – that since both my existence and my friend's existence are good, it is pleasant for me to perceive both my existence and his. But what Aristotle actually concludes is very different. Observe the conclusion once more:

> 11) συναισθάνεσθαι ἄρα δεῖ καὶ τοῦ φίλου ὅτι ἔστιν, τοῦτο δὲ γίνοιτ' ἂν ἐν τῷ συζῆν καὶ κοινωνεῖν λόγων καὶ διανοίας.
>
> There must be a shared perception of one's friend, that he exists, and this occurs by their living life together and sharing in discussion and thought. (*NE* IX.9 1170b10-13)

I will now show that this is simply too rich and complex of a conclusion for its only meaning to be that we take pleasure in perceiving (αἰσθάνεσθαι) our friends just as we take pleasure in perceiving ourselves, and that in this sense the two are choiceworthy in the same way. I offer the following reasons in support of this claim:

First, notice that the conclusion contains a normative component (δεῖ). While it looked like Aristotle was going to conclude with a descriptive claim about what makes

the existence of one's friend choiceworthy (which is all the Kraut-reading requires), he instead concluded with a prescription.[141] Second, notice Aristotle's claim about shared living (συζῆν) – the claim that συναισθάνεσθαι of one's friend comes about through living together and sharing in discussion and thought. Shared living entails not necessarily sharing the same home (as 'living together' might imply), but strictly entails the sharing of an active life. It is to take the activities that are constitutive of one's own life and to engage in those activities together with a friend.

> Whatever existing is for them, or that for the sake of which they choose living– in *this* they wish to engage in with their friends. For this reason, some friends drink together, others play games together, still others take exercise and hunt together, or even philosophize together – each group spending their time together on whatever thing in life they are most fond of. For because they wish to live life with their friends, they do these things and share them with those with whom they intend to live. (*NE* IX.12 1172a1-9)

Suppose Aristotle had only meant to convey the point that we take pleasure in perceiving (αἰσθάνεσθαι) our friends just as we take pleasure in perceiving ourselves. Why, then, would he have needed to stress the importance of living together and the continual sharing in conversation and thought? It does not take much, after all, to simply perceive a friend. It certainly does not require the kind of intimacy and constancy implied by Aristotle's conception of shared living. This is what makes Kraut's translation of the conclusion a faulty one:

> Therefore, one must also perceive that one's friend exists; and this would come about through living with him and sharing in conversation and thought. (Kraut 1989, 141)

By treating συναισθάνεσθαι as if it were just αἰσθάνεσθαι, Kraut has Aristotle recommending surgery for something a simple aspirin would take care of. Living with a

[141] I will say more about this point later.

friend and sharing in conversation and thought with him would surely make it easy to perceive him, but so would spending twenty minutes with him cleaning the garage.

But what exactly does συναισθάνεσθαι mean as Aristotle uses it here? As mentioned earlier, the prefix 'συν' presumably indicates shared activity, as with other verbs like συζῆν (shared living), so a neutral and *prima facie* translation is "to share in perception (with another person)". Aristotle's use of this term occurs in both the *Eudemian* and *Nicomachean Ethics,* and in both treatises the term is used in the context of why the self-sufficient person needs friends. Some have tried to make sense of the *Nicomachean* passage in question by looking to the corresponding *Eudemian* passages in which Aristotle uses συναισθάνεσθαι.[142] But I think that this is a faulty strategy, and that the two treatises provide for a contrast in this respect, not a comparison. In the *Eudemian Ethics,* Aristotle uses συναισθάνεσθαι in a way congenial to the neutral translation given above to denote different perceivers perceiving the same things together. But in the *Nicomachean* passage in question, the term is used to denote a *kind* of *self-awareness* (or so I shall argue).[143]

The term occurs twice in the *Eudemian Ethics.* At the start of *EE* VII.12, Aristotle takes up the *aporia* regarding self-sufficiency and friendship, noting how both sides of the argument – the side that says that the truly self-sufficient person will have no need of friends, and the side that says that friends are necessary – have some merit. He

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[142] E.g. Kosman (2004), Osborne (2009).

[143] Sorabji (2005 v.1, 159) thinks that it clearly has this meaning in IX.9: "But in the *Nicomachean Ethics* at 1170b4-5, Aristotle clearly uses it [the verb *sunaisthanethai*] for self-awareness, and probably also a few lines later at b10, if awareness of the friend's existence in the course of living together and sharing words and thoughts flows from awareness of one's *own* activities as *shared.*"

then suggests that the *aporia* may be solved if we "ascertain what life is in its active sense and as end" (δῆλον δὲ λαβοῦσι τί τὸ ζῆν τὸ κατ' ἐνέργειαν, καὶ ὡς τέλος):

> φανερὸν οὖν ὅτι τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι καὶ τὸ γνωρίζειν, ὥστε καὶ τὸ συζῆν τὸ **συναισθάνεσθαι** καὶ τὸ συγγνωρίζειν ἐστίν. ἔστι δὲ τὸ αὑτοῦ αἰσθάνεσθαι καὶ τὸ αὐτὸν γνωρίζειν αἱρετώτατον ἑκάστῳ, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τοῦ ζῆν πᾶσιν ἔμφυτος ἡ ὄρεξις: τὸ γὰρ ζῆν δεῖ τιθέναι γνῶσιν τινά.
>
> Clearly it is perceiving and knowing, with the result that shared living is shared-perceiving and shared-knowing. And knowing oneself, and perceiving oneself, is most choiceworthy for each, and for this reason the desire of life innate in everyone. For it is necessary to regard living as some kind of knowledge.[144]

The second occurrence of the term is at 1245b20-24:

> καὶ τὸ ζητεῖν ἡμῖν καὶ εὔχεσθαι πολλοὺς φίλους, ἅμα δὲ λέγειν ὡς οὐθεὶς φίλος ᾧ πολλοὶ φίλοι, ἄμφω λέγεται ὀρθῶς. ἐνδεχομένου γὰρ πολλοῖς συζῆν ἅμα καὶ **συναισθάνεσθαι** ὡς πλείστοις αἱρετώτατον: ἐπεὶ δὲ χαλεπώτατον, ἐν ἐλάττοσιν ἀνάγκη τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς **συναισθήσεως** εἶναι.
>
> As to our seeking and praying for many friends, while we say of the person with many friends that he has no friend, both are said correctly. For if it is possible to live with many people and to share in perception with many people at the same time, it is most choiceworthy that these should be as many as possible. But since that is most difficult, it is necessary for the activity of sharing in perception to exist among fewer.[145]

In both cases, the translation "sharing in perception" is apt, for Aristotle is claiming nothing more than that friends perceive the same things together with each other. If living for me consists in perceiving, then shared living with another consists in perceiving *with* him.

But this shows that Aristotle's use of συναισθάνεσθαι in *NE* IX.9 is very different, for in that passage συναισθάνεσθαι takes as its direct object *one's friend* - τοῦ

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[144] *EE* 124424-27, my translation.

[145] My translation.

φίλου ὅτι ἔστιν[146] (*NE* IX.9 1170b10). Here συναισθάνεσθαι denotes an action that one person performs *on* another, not an activity that one engages in *with* another. This is why the simple translation "to share in perception with another" is unsatisfactory for the *Nicomachean* passage.[147] Let φ stand for the activity denoted by συναισθάνεσθαι. There is a difference between the following two claims:

1) *A* must φ with *B*.

2) *A* must φ *B*.

It is the *second* claim that Aristotle makes in *NE* IX.9.

But what exactly does it mean to συναισθάνεσθαι another person? This, in part, depends on how we understand the 'συν' in συναισθάνεσθαι, what we take it to be modifying. Taking the standard meaning of the prefix as "with" or "together", the sentence could mean one of the following:

> M1: Aristotle is saying that the good person must perceive his friend's existence *together with his friend.* A and B perceive B's existence together.
>
> M2: Aristotle is saying that the good person must perceive his friend's existence *together with his own existence.* A perceives both B's existence and A's existence at the same time.

M2 makes the most sense and is widely agreed upon by commentators to be the meaning of the sentence, as is revealed by a number of translations.[148] While M1 provides for a

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[146] A paraphrase of this might be "the friend's life".

[147] Notice in *EE* 1245b20-24 the use of the dative πολλοῖς in ἐνδεχομένου γὰρ πολλοῖς συζῆν ἅμα καὶ συναισθάνεσθαι indicating that the συν in συναισθάνεσθαι should be taken with it to mean "perceiving *with* many people". This does not happen in the *NE* passage, as συναισθάνεσθαι takes a direct object, indicating that we have to understand the συν differently.

[148] A telling sample: "He needs, therefore, to be conscious of the existence of his friend as well, and this will be realized in their living together and sharing in discussion and thought" (Ross – in Barnes 1984, 1850). - - "In that case, he needs to be concurrently perceiving the friend – that he exists, too – and this will

possible reading, no one has argued for it, and it does not follow from the premises of the argument.

Let us now turn to the prescriptive force of the conclusion, and to Aristotle's claim that perceiving one's own existence at the same time as one's friend's comes as a result of shared living. Let us use Rowe's translation as a guide:

> In that case, he needs (δεῖ) to be concurrently perceiving the friend – that he exists, too – and this will come about in their living together, conversing, and sharing their talk and thoughts.[149]

What *needs* to take place is that *A* perceives his own existence at *the same time* as he perceives *B's*. This implies that it is not enough that *A* perceives *B's* existence and nothing more. The exhortation to shared living supports this, since merely perceiving someone can occur sufficiently without the sharing of life. But it is still somewhat unclear why it is necessary to perceive both the being of one's friend and one's own being *at the same time*. What purpose does the simultaneity serve for the argument? And furthermore, it seems possible to perceive one's own being and the being of one's friend simultaneously without the constancy and intimacy implied by shared living, so there is still the question of how to make sense of Aristotle's exhortation to shared living, given its place in the argument.

To answer these questions, we should focus our attention once more on the reasoning of the two steps of the argument that immediately precede the conclusion:

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come about in their living together, conversing, and sharing their talk and thoughts" (Rowe 2002, 238) - - "He must, then, perceive his friend's being together [with his own], and he will do this when they live together and share conversation and thought" (Irwin 1999, 150) - - "Therefore we ought to have a sympathetic consciousness of the existence of our friend, and this can arise by means of living together with him, and sharing words and thoughts with him" (Grant 1885, 305) - - Early in the paper I used Pakaluk's translation because it is neutral between M1 and M2: "Hence there must also be a shared perception of his friend, that he exists, and this would occur by their living life together and sharing in discussion and thought" (Pakaluk 1998, 39).

[149] Rowe (2002, 238).

9) In just the same way that one's own existence is worth choosing, one's friend's existence is worth choosing. (1170b7-8)[150]

10) One's own existence is worth choosing because of the pleasure found in perceiving oneself as good. (1170b8-9)

As previously mentioned, these two premises set the stage for a claim about the way in which the existence of one's friend is choiceworthy. The fact that the conclusion states that there is a need to perceive one's friend's existence at the same time as one's own strongly suggests that such 'simultaneous perception' is what makes it the case that one's friend's existence is choiceworthy *in the same way* as one's own. *This* is why Aristotle is justified in inferring step 11) from steps 7) – 10). When A is able to perceive B's existence simultaneously with his own existence, the two are choiceworthy to A in the same way.

I propose, then, a slightly different way of interpreting the meaning of the conclusion. I still follow Rowe *et al.* in interpreting the 'συν' in συναισθάνεσθαι as conjoining the existence of one's friend with one's own existence. However, I interpret "perceiving one's friend's existence simultaneously with one's own" as equivalent to "perceiving one's friend's existence and one's own existence *together as one.*" *This* is the appeal to the "single soul". Consider the following passage from the *Eudemian Ethics:*

> For the friend wants, if possible, not merely to feel pain along with his friend, but to feel the same pain, e.g. to feel thirsty when he is thirsty, if that could be, as closely as possible. The same words are applicable to joy, which, if felt for no other reason than that the other feels joy, is a sign of friendship. Further, we say about friendship such things that friendship is equality, and true friends a single soul. (*Eudemian Ethics* 1240a36-1240b9)

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[150] This claim is qualified in the text by παραπλησίως. I shall later discuss the difficulties this poses.

Analogously to the claim about pain, I think that Aristotle would want to claim that the friend wants not merely to perceive his own existence along with his friend's existence, but to perceive the two as *the same* existence.

Obviously this is a strong reading of the conclusion. But there is a great advantage in interpreting the conclusion in this way. Namely, *it makes better sense of the argument from nature.* The appeal to higher-order perception no longer presents a difficulty, the use of συναισθάνεσθαι is no longer obscure and mysterious, and Aristotle's exhortation to shared living makes a lot more sense. If to συναισθάνεσθαι one's friend means to perceive the existence of one's friend and one's own existence together as one, then perceiving a friend's existence is the same as perceiving one's own existence, and therefore perceiving a friend's existence is a higher-order perception. In other words, to make my friend's perceiving the object of my perception is, in a way, to make my own perceiving the object of my perception. When I συναισθάνεσθαι my friend, I have a higher order perception of the existence that is ours. We can therefore make better sense of Aristotle's peculiar obsession with higher-order perception on this interpretation. One's own existence is choiceworthy, in large part, due to the value of higher-order perception, and Aristotle insists that one's own and one's friend's existence are choiceworthy in the same way. This is why it matters that to perceive a friend is, in a way, to perceive oneself.[151] Such 'simultaneous perception' is that at which the best kind of friendship aims.

This interpretation, in addition, is well supported by Aristotle's claims regarding *nous* in *De Anima* III.4. I noted earlier that Aristotle's claim at *DA* 429a25 that *nous* is

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[151] "Therefore, to perceive a friend must be in a way to perceive one's self and to know a friend to know one's self" (*EE* 1245a35).

not actually any real thing before it thinks is closely paralleled by certain claims in *NE* IX.7 and IX.9: "It is by our actuality that we exist, since we exist by living and acting" (*NE* IX.7 1168a6-8); and "living seems to be strictly perceiving and thinking" (*NE* IX.9 1170a19). I claimed that Aristotle held that friendship has a crucial role to play in self-actualization. Now we may say what that role is. If *nous* can only actualize itself by becoming something else, and it is only in gaining awareness of this, its object, that it can gain awareness of itself, naturally the question arises of what happens when one *nous* apprehends another *nous,* as in the case of friendship. As Stern-Gillet notes, it can be inferred that friendship involves the "noetic conflation of the friends' selves".[152] I would add that the conflation results in a single actuality – the substance of Aristotle's "single soul". Aristotle *is* claiming that friendship has a crucial role to play in self-realization, but *not* in the kind of way that provides grist for the mill for those who think that Aristotelian friendship is fundamentally egoistic. I'd prefer to call it *we*goistic. In friendship, it is not that I use my friend to actualize myself, or that he uses me to actualize himself. Rather, through joint activity, it is a single self that is actualized. And in perception, when one friend engages in the activity denoted by the verb συναισθάνεσθαι, he perceives the existence of that single self.

Furthermore, it makes much more sense on this interpretation that Aristotle would immediately appeal to the importance of shared living (συζῆν). I posed this question earlier: If Aristotle had only meant to convey the point that we take pleasure in

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[152] For an alternative view on the role of *nous* in friendship, see Kahn (1981), who argues that the *nous* that Aristotle speaks of in *NE* IX.4 and IX.8 is the same as the active-*nous* of the notoriously cryptic *De Anima* III.5 passage, in which Aristotle posits the existence of an active, universal *nous* which is causally responsible for the thinking of each of us without being essentially identified by its relationship with us. For pointed criticisms of Kahn's view, see Benson (1990, 68), and Pangle (2003, 240 n18).

perceiving (αισθάνεσθαι) our friends just as we take pleasure in perceiving ourselves, why would he have needed to stress the importance of living together and the continual sharing in conversation and thought? Merely perceiving a friend does not require the kind of intimacy and constancy implied by τῷ συζῆν καὶ κοινωνεῖν λόγων καὶ διανοίας (1170b11).[153]

But to perceive one's own existence and the existence of one's friend together as one – *that* takes precisely the kind of time, intimacy and constancy required by shared living and shared conversation and thought. It is this shared living that provides for the metaphysical fact of oneness, which makes *sunaisthanesthai* possible. Aristotle repeats this point in IX.12:

> κοινωνία γὰρ ἡ φιλία, καὶ ὡς πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἔχει, οὕτω καὶ πρὸς τὸν φίλον· περὶ αὑτὸν δ' ἡ αἴσθησις ὅτι ἔστιν αἱρετή, καὶ περὶ τὸν φίλον δή· ἡ δ' ἐνέργεια γίνεται αὐτῆς ἐν τῷ συζῆν· ὥστ' εἰκότως τούτου

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[153] Irene Liu, in correspondence, suggests that I may be unnecessarily restricting myself by confining the meaning of *aisthanesthai* and *sunaisthanesthai* to physical perception, a point Professor Morrison has also once brought up in conversation. [Liu has written on this topic. See Liu (2010).] She writes:

> "Do you mean literally seeing, hearing, smelling, etc. a person? Is it a kind of (for lack of a better word) physical perception of a physical thing? I ask this because it seems to me that a clarification of what it means to simply perceive oneself or a friend would go some ways towards elucidating what it means to jointly perceive. Indeed, the physical conception of perception seems also to be implicit in your understanding of *sunaisthêsis*. For instance, you claim that *sunaisthêsis* must be done at the same time, presumably meaning that the friends must be physically together. But is this what you mean? If it is, I wonder whether you're unnecessarily restricting yourself. Your suggestion seems to be that joint perception is a temporally- and spatially-bounded physical act. But living together, as you say, is a much richer concept than simply living in the same house, say. In that case, why restrict yourself to simultaneity (and physical proximity)? Aristotle seems to be nudging us away from that conception when he denies that our living together is like grazing cattle."

In response: I don't intend to restrict myself to physical perception, but I do think that physical perception deserves very special emphasis in the argument. Here is why - and I actually don't think that Aristotle is nudging us away from that conception when he denies that our living together is like grazing cattle. At the very start of *NE* IX.12, Aristotle gives a brief recap of the central claims of the argument from nature (1171b30-1172a), and he says that for friends, just as for lovers, seeing (τὸ ὁρᾶν) is the most precious form of perception and that it is through seeing that love exists and comes to be, and he links this up with συζῆν. This does not mean that there are not other kinds of perception denoted by *aisthanesthai,* but just that seeing is the most important. It is true that living together is a much richer concept than simply living in the same house (or pasture in the case of those grazing animals Aristotle is so fond of referencing), but I have always taken that point to follow from the fact that living together involves sharing in discussion and thought.

ἐφίενται. (*NE* IX.12 1171b32-35)

> For friendship is holding things in common, and as a friend is related to himself, so is he also to his friend; but in his own case the perception that he exists is worth choosing; hence also in the case of his friend; but its actuality comes about through their living life together; so naturally they aim at this. (*NE* IX.12 1171b32-35)

Again he makes the point that in order for the existence of one's friend to be choiceworthy in the same way as one's own, shared living and activity must take place. And this time he refers to what results from shared living as an ἐνέργεια. Only through shared living can the noetic conflation – the ἐνέργεια of the single soul - be sustained. And this is precisely why friends "aim" at συζῆν – because it provides for the possibility of συναισθάνεσθαι, thus making it so that one's friend's existence is choiceworthy in the same way as one's own. The argument from nature, then, makes a strong appeal to the idea that friends are a kind of unity – a "single soul", as Aristotle puts it. In the next section, I explain just what kind of unity this is.

2.3. Unity, Reciprocal Shaping, and the Metaphysics of the Single Soul

It was argued in section 2.1.2 that according to Aristotle, the virtuous person is a self in the fullest sense because the non-rational part of his soul agrees with his rational-part. So for Aristotle, to be a self in the fullest sense is to be a kind of unity – a *psychic* unity in the sense that *nous* rules the appetites and in addition the appetites are in full agreement with *nous*.[154] This 'unity' aspect of selfhood, for Aristotle, has important

[154] In contrast, base people are not unities due to psychic conflict. Those who suffer from weakness of will "abandon themselves" (*NE* VII.8 1151a1), while the vicious are "at odds with themselves" (*NE* IX.4 1166b7). Since we have determined that Aristotle thinks that base people are still selves, we should read those remarks in quotations as meaning that base people abandon their *true* selves, or the selves that they *ought* to be caring for but are not caring for. It should also be noted that Aristotle creates trouble for himself by describing the vicious person in this way, for the description conflicts with that of the vicious

implications for friendship and his view that friends are a single soul. As we saw in Chapter II, Aristotle derives friendship to others from friendship to oneself in IX.4. Self-love is the model on which friendship is based. With respect to unity, the point is that just as the good person is a kind of unity unto himself, so is the best type of friendship a kind of unity unto itself. Just as the good person "agrees with himself" and "desires the same things with his entire soul", so do good people who are friends – other selves to one another – agree in the same way, and desire the same things in the same way.

As Benson notes, the way to draw the analogy is *not*: as the parts of the soul are related in the individual, so the separate persons are related in friendship. Rather, the analogy is: "as the rational part of the individual is to his non-rational part, so the united rational parts of the partnership are to its united non-rational parts" (1990, 54). I agree with Benson that what underlies the reflexive relationship of the good man to himself is "a certain psychic structure, a relationship between elements which are defined by their functions in the life of the organism," and that "in friendship two individuals become united in such a way that they embody a single psychic structure of this kind, 'a single soul'" (1990, 54). The question to be raised now is: In what sense of "one" are these souls one? I shall show that we can find in Aristotle's discussions of unity in *Metaphysics* Delta and Iota a description of the very sense of unity that applies here.

2.3.1. Types of Unity in *Metaphysics* Δ & I

In *Metaphysics* Delta, Aristotle's philosophical dictionary, Aristotle distinguishes between two broad classes of things called "one" (ἕν): 1) that which is one by accident

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person in VII.8. In that chapter, Aristotle says that the intemperate person "is not prone to regret, since he abides by his decision when he acts. But every incontinent is prone to regret" (*NE* VII.8 1150b30-31). For good discussions of this problem, see Martin (1990) and Pakaluk (2002).

(κατὰ συμβεβηκός); 2) that which is one by its own nature (καθ' αὑτό).[155] For two things to be one by accident is for one of them to be a substance and the other to be a quality (and so, an accident) of that substance. Aristotle gives his standard example of 'musical' being predicated of 'Corsicus'. Musical Corsicus is one with Corsicus "because one of the parts in the formula is an accident of the other, i.e. musical is an accident of Corsicus" (*Met.* Δ.6 1015b24-25). Aristotle calls this kind of unity accidental because Corsicus would still be Corsicus even if he were not musical (*Met.* Δ.9 1017b32-1018a2).

Accidental unity cannot be the kind of unity Aristotle has in mind when he says that friends are one. Clearly he does not construe the friendship relation between two individuals as an instance of the substance-accident relation, for that would mean that one friend is an accident, the other a substance, and the one friend an accident of the other. Such a construal would be anathema to Aristotle's insistence that character-friendship is a friendship between equals. To call one friend the substance and the other the accident of that substance would subordinate the friend-as-accident to an inferior role. We must, then, examine what Aristotle has to say about the things that are one by nature.

With respect to the things that we call one by nature, Aristotle begins his discussion by claiming that anything continuous is one, and offers as an example a bundle of pieces of wood held together by glue (*Met.* Δ.6 1016b32). Still more oneness is found in those things that are continuous by nature and so by nature have one movement

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[155] *Met.* Δ.6 1015b16-17.

and cannot have any other, like arms and legs (*Met.* Δ.6 1016a3-6).[156] In these cases, the entity has unity in virtue of its body being continuous. In another sense, an entity is called one in virtue of its matter not differing in kind and being indivisible in kind.[157] So, "wine is said to be one and water is said to be one, *qua* indivisible in kind; and, on the other hand, *all* juices, e.g. oil and wine, are said to be one, and so are all things that can be melted, because the ultimate substratum of all is the same; for all of these are water or air" (*Met.* Δ.6 1016a21-24). And in another sense, those things that are one in genus (γένος) are said to be one. Horse, man, and dog – Aristotle says – are one because all are animals (*Met.* Δ.6 1016a26). Finally, things are one when the formula which states the essence of one is indivisible from the formula which states the essence of the other (1016a32-1016b5). Aristotle's first example of this seems to be of a single individual which can grow larger or smaller and yet remain the same individual, the idea being that the formula which states the essence (ὁ λόγος ὁ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι λέγων) of him when he is large is the same as the formula which states the essence of him when he is small. *Qua* man, he does not admit of division, and so is one man.[158]

In a summary statement, Aristotle then claims:

> The things that are primarily called one are those whose substance (οὐσία) is one – and one either in continuity or in form (εἴδει) or in formula (λόγῳ); for we count as more than one either things that are not

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[156] The things that are continuous by nature, Aristotle says, are more one (μάλλον ἕν) than the things continues by art. This shows that Aristotle thinks that unity comes in degrees, an important point that I will draw heavily on later when describing the unity of friendship.

[157] *Met.* Δ.6 1016a18-20.

[158] I follow Kirwan's commentary in making these points about what it means to be one in formula (1993, 138).

> continuous, or those whose form is not one, or those whose formula is not one.[159]

I follow Kirwan (1993, 138) in reading this passage as saying that substance is used in three senses, and that the primary unities are things whose bodies are one in continuity, whose matter is one in kind, or whose what-it-is-to-be is one in formula.[160]

Aristotle's paradigm case of unity seems to be of a single entity, like an individual human being, a house, an arm or a leg. A man, for instance, is continuous; his matter is one in kind, and the formula that states his essence is indivisible and unchanging. Aristotle must have this kind of case in mind when he, apparently in summary, later identifies 'one in number' as a category of unity (1016b31-35). In that apparent summary, he says:

> Again, some things are one in number (ἀριθμόν), others in form (εἶδος), others in genus, others by analogy;[161] in number those whose matter is one (ἀριθμῷ μὲν ὧν ἡ ὕλη), in form those whose formula is one, in genus those to which the same figure of predication applies, by analogy those which are related as one thing is to another. The latter kinds of unity are always found when the former are, e.g. things that are one in number are one in form, while things that are one in form are not all one in number.

Kirwan (1993, 139) finds this paragraph "intrusive" since it conflates 'one in form' with 'one in formula' and adds that things numerically different may be the same in form, which was previously glossed over. Aquinas, in his commentary, says that here Aristotle is giving "another way of dividing unity, and this division is rather from the viewpoint of

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[159] *Met.* Δ.6 1016b7-11.

[160] As Kirwan (1993, 138) notes, those things that are one in genus are probably meant in a secondary sense to fall under those things whose matter is one in kind (*eidos*). Aristotle says anything that is one in genus "is in a way similar to that in which the matter is one" (1016b27).

[161] I will have nothing to say in the main text about analogical unity. Aristotle does not say very much about it. X and Y and one by analogy of they are related to some unified thing Z. It is clear that Aristotle thinks that friends are a unity by some analogy to the unity found in the individual person, but surely to just leave it at that would be question begging.

logic" (V. L.8:C 876). At any rate, this passage is important because in it Aristotle recognizes that oneness is applicable not just to a single entity, but also to a plurality of entities, since two entities can be one in form but not one in number. We can ask in what sense a single entity is one with itself, and we can also ask in what sense two entities are one with each other. So, in the primary sense of unity – Socrates is one with himself. In presumably a secondary sense, Socrates is one with Aristotle insofar as both are the same in kind (both are rational animals), and insofar as the formula which states the essence of Socrates is the same as the formula which states the essence of Aristotle (again, both are rational animals).

Of these senses of unity, *none* of them describes the unity that is friendship. Clearly friends cannot be one in number, so this sense of unity must be ruled out as a possible application to friendship. So, friends are not a single substance, whether in the sense of one continuous thing, one material thing, or one thing whose essence is indivisible. Friends are two people, and they're not literally held together by glue.[162] Nor are they a single piece of flesh. As Aristotle is reported by Diogenes to have said, the "single soul" dwells in *two bodies.* We should therefore *not* attribute to him the view that there is some deep and mysterious metaphysical sense in which friends are a single substance and not numerically distinct. And as should be clear, unity in genus cannot be the unity that is characteristic of friendship. Horse, man, and dog – Aristotle says – are one because all are animals (*Met.* Δ.6 1016a26). Obviously this is too weak to be the kind of unity that Aristotle has in mind for friendship, for it would mean that being animals is what essentially makes for the friendship between my friend and me. But

[162] Even if they were, being held together by glue could hardly be the essence of friendship.

surely it is more than that. And for this reason, we cannot say that two numerically distinct friends are one in the sense of possessing the same formula which states their essences. This, too, would be too weak, for it would mean that "being rational animals" is what essentially makes for friendship between my friend and me. This does not suffice to distinguish a friendship from other associations and relationships.[163]

Fortunately, there is another sense of unity found in both books Delta and Iota that *is* applicable to friendship. In Δ.9, Aristotle discusses sameness (ταυτότης). Just as he did with oneness, he draws a distinction between accidental sameness and by-nature sameness, and he then claims:

> τὰ δὲ καθ' αὑτὰ ὁσαχῶσπερ καὶ τὸ ἕν: καὶ γὰρ ὧν ἡ ὕλη μία ἢ εἴδει ἢ ἀριθμῷ ταὐτὰ λέγεται καὶ ὧν ἡ οὐσία μία, ὥστε φανερὸν ὅτι ἡ ταυτότης ἑνότης τίς ἐστιν ἢ πλειόνων τοῦ εἶναι ἢ ὅταν χρῆται ὡς πλείοσιν, οἷον ὅταν λέγῃ αὐτὸ αὐτῷ ταὐτόν: ὡς δυσὶ γὰρ χρῆται αὐτῷ.
>
> Things are said to be the same by their own nature in as many ways as they are said to be one; for both the things whose matter is one either in kind or in number, and those whose substance is one, are said to be the same. Clearly, therefore, sameness is a kind of unity of the being of either more than one thing or of one thing when it is treated as more than one, i.e. when we say a thing is the same as itself; for we treat it as two. (*Met.* Δ.9 1018a8-10)

So, we can ask of a single entity whether and in what sense it is the same, and we can ask of a plurality of entities whether and in what sense they are the same. This gets repeated at *Met.* I.3 1054a33-1054b3, where Aristotle says that "the same" has several meanings

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[163] In addition, though he recognizes at *Met.* Δ.9 1018a6 that two numerically distinct pieces of matter can be the same in kind, he can't mean that two friends are a unity in the sense that they share the same kind of matter (i.e. both friends are flesh and bone, and so one in that way). If that were the case, then all flesh-and-bone humans would have to be considered friends.

and that we sometimes mean "the same numerically", so "you are one with yourself"; other times we mean the same only in formula, so equal straight lines are the same.[164]

Aristotle, then, treats sameness as a kind of unity.[165] He thinks that ways to be qualitatively the same *are* ways to be one. This is confirmed in *Met.* I.3, the chapter in which Aristotle attempts to explain the various ways in which the one (τὸ ἕν) and the many (τὰ πολλὰ) are opposed. There he tells us that the same (ταὐτό), the like (ὅμοιον), and the equal (ἴσον) belong to the one,[166] while the other (ἕτερον), the unlike (ανόμοιον), and the unequal (ἄνισον) belong to the many.[167] These same concepts are discussed in the remainder of Δ.9, and here I would like to focus on Aristotle's discussion of the ways in which things are called other (ἕτερα) and like (ὅμοια).[168]

> ἕτερα δὲ λέγεται ὧν ἢ τὰ εἴδη πλείω ἢ ἡ ὕλη ἢ ὁ λόγος τῆς οὐσίας.
>
> Things are called other if either their kinds or their matters or the formulae of their substance are more than one. (*Met.* Δ.9 1018a10-11)

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[164] "We call a thing the same if it is one both in formula and in number, e.g. you are one with yourself both in form and in matter; and again, if the formula of its primary substance is one, e.g. equal straight lines are the same..." (1054a34-b2)

[165] See Kirwan (1993, 150). Cf. Aquinas (X. L.4:C 1999).

[166] See *Met.* I.3 1054b30. He uses the phrase ἔστι δὲ τοῦ μὲν ἑνός to express this point. This may be a partitive genitive, indicating that the same, the like, and the equal are "parts of the one". He uses the same sort of genitive to say that the other, unlike, and unequal belong to the many: τοῦ δὲ πλήθους.

[167] According to Aquinas' understanding of *Met.* I.3: "...those things are the *same* which are one in substance; those things are *like* which are one in quality; and those are *equal* which are one in quantity" (X. L.4:C 1999). This is tricky and bound to be misleading, because two numerically distinct substances can still be one in kind. So, Socrates and Aristotle are the same insofar as they are both rational animals, but insofar as they are numerically distinct, they belong in the category of other.

[168] He also discusses the senses in which things are called different (διάφορα), which also comes up in Iota.3. Interestingly, the unlike (ανόμοιον) is quickly glossed over in both Delta.9 and Iota.3. In Delta.9, Aristotle just says that the uses of 'unlike' correspond to the uses of 'like' in the last sentence of the chapter.

One inference licensed by this passage is that two individuals (say, two friends) may be called "other" insofar as they are numerically distinct.[169] But as we have seen, mere numerical distinctness does not preclude the possibility of unity. So, just because two friends are ἄλλοι or ἕτεροι[170] does not mean that unity cannot exist among them.

What that unity consists of, I claim, is given in Aristotle's discussion of the like:

> ὅμοια λέγεται τά τε πάντῃ ταὐτὸ πεπονθότα, καὶ τὰ πλείω ταὐτὰ πεπονθότα ἢ ἕτερα, καὶ ὧν ἡ ποιότης μία: καὶ καθ' ὅσα ἀλλοιοῦσθαι ἐνδέχεται τῶν ἐναντίων, τούτων τὸ πλείω ἔχον ἢ κυριώτερα ὅμοιον τούτῳ.
>
> Those things are called like which have the same affections[171] in every respect, those which have more affections the same than different, or those whose quality is one. And that which shares with another thing the greater number or more important of the attributes (each of them one of two contraries) in respect of which things are capable of altering, is like that other thing. (*Met.* Δ.9 1018a15-19)[172]

Several senses of likeness are presented in this passage, some with more clarity than others.[173] But one sense of likeness that is perfectly clear from this passage is this: sameness in affections. Aristotle's view is that two numerically distinct beings are unified insofar as they are ὅμοια, and are ὅμοια insofar as they share the same affections,

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[169] See Aquinas (V. L.12:C 913).

[170] ἕτερος αὐτός is used once in *NE* IX.9 in the claim that the friend is another self; the remaining occurrences of the other-self claim use *allos autos.*

[171] I slightly amend Ross' translation here by using "affection" as a translation of πεπονθότα. He uses "attribute".

[172] Cf. *Met.* I.3 1054b4-14: "…Other things are called like if the qualities they have in common are more numerous than those in which they differ – either the qualities in general or the prominent qualities…"

[173] There would seem to be five: Two things are ὅμοια, according to Aristotle, if: 1) they have all the same characteristics; 2) most of their characteristics are the same; 3) they have one (and only one) and the same quality; 4) most of their potentially alterable characteristics that are one of two contraries are the same; 5) of the more important potentially alterable characteristics that are one of two contraries, they share all of them. The first three are pretty clear. 4) and 5) are difficult and unclear. The example Aquinas gives of 5) is this: "For example, garlic, which is hot and dry, is said to be more properly like fire than sugar, which is hot and moist" (V. L.12:C 920).

or at least most of the same affections. It is significant that Aristotle uses πεπονθότα to express what might also be translated as "attribute" or "quality" in this context.[174] It is a word that he uses in the context of friendship too. The beneficiaries from *NE* IX.7 are "those having been treated well" (τοῦς εὖ πεπονθότας), and they are contrasted with the benefactors who *make* them well (οἱ εὖ πεποιηκότες). As we shall see, it this kind of unity – *affective unity* – that is characteristic of friendship.

Friends of the best kind, according to Aristotle, share the same traits, characteristics, qualities, etc., and their unity consists in this. Now, this may sound unimpressive right now, for one might think that the kind of unity needed to solve the problem of motivation in the way that I have suggested Aristotle solves it is much stronger than mere sameness in traits. I aim to assuage this worry in the next section. The notion of unity that I have identified in *Metaphysics* Delta in this section is buttressed and significantly strengthened by Aristotle's argument in *NE* IX.7, and also by key passages in *NE* IX.12. The unity that I claim is characteristic of friendship is the result of a certain kind of process that I call reciprocal shaping - a process that has important normative consequences.

2.3.2. Affective Unity and Reciprocal Shaping in *NE* IX.7&12: Introductory Remarks

As noted in Chapter II, in *NE* IX.7 Aristotle seeks to explain why benefactors seem to love their beneficiaries more than their beneficiaries love them. Some seek to explain this phenomenon by likening benefactors and beneficiaries to creditors and debtors: "...when loans are made, debtors wish that their creditors did not exist, but

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[174] Ross uses "attribute".

lenders go so far as to provide for the safety of people indebted to them, so too benefactors wish their beneficiaries to exist with the intent of gleaning favors, whereas the latter have no concern with making repayment" (*NE* IX.7 1167b21-25). Aristotle rejects this explanation and claims that the paradigm more suited to the nature of a benefactor and his beneficiary is that of a maker and his work. If the work were to come alive, it would not love its maker as much as its maker loves it. "This is the sort of thing, then, that the case of benefactors is in fact like: that which has been treated well (τὸ εὖ πεπονθός) is their work; thus they cherish this more than the work does its maker" (*NE* IX.7 1168a3-5). And the explanation of *this* is as follows:

> 1) Existing is, for everyone, worth choosing and lovable.[175]
>
> 2) It is by our actuality that we exist, since we exist by living and acting.
>
> 3) The work is, somehow, its maker in actuality. (ἐνεργείᾳ δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστι πως·)
>
> 4) Hence, he is fond of his work – for the reason that (διότι) he loves existing. And this is natural, because what he is potentially, his work reveals in actuality. (*NE* IX.7 1168a5-8)

One question we have not quite asked yet is: Why compare the relationship of friends to the relationship of a maker and his product? It seems like a faulty comparison, as it relegates one friend to a superior and the other to an inferior role.[176] But the friendship of those alike in virtue is supposed to be one of equality. The comparison to maker and product, however, is one of the most powerful comparisons that Aristotle makes in his account of *philia.* What Aristotle does not particularly emphasize in IX.7,

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[175] Aristotle is being slightly inconsistent here, for he elsewhere denies that the base person's existence is worth choosing (*NE* IX.4). So, not *everyone's* existence is worth choosing.

[176] And, as Pakaluk notes, the sort of regard that craftsmen typically have for their products "is different in kind from the devotion they have to persons" (1998, 187).

but what no doubt still holds true, is that friendship involves reciprocity.[177] What we must keep in mind about the argument of IX.7 is that in a friendship, each friend is at once *both* benefactor *and* beneficiary, *both* the maker *and* the made. From my own point of view, I am mere potential, while my friend is me in actuality. But from my friend's point of view, he is mere potential, while I am him in actuality. As I shape the identity of my friend and the good-making features of his life, simultaneously he shapes mine. This is reciprocal shaping, the process by which friends become affectively unified – a single soul.

Friendship truly is about, according to Aristotle, shaping and being shaped by and coming to be like each other.[178] Further confirmation of this is found in *NE* IX.12:

> γίνεται οὖν ἡ μὲν τῶν φαύλων φιλία μοχθηρά (κοινωνοῦσι γὰρ φαύλων ἀβέβαιοι ὄντες, καὶ μοχθηροὶ δὲ γίνονται ὁμοιούμενοι ἀλλήλοις), ἡ δὲ τῶν ἐπιεικῶν ἐπιεικής, συναυξανομένη ταῖς ὁμιλίαις· δοκοῦσι δὲ καὶ βελτίους γίνεσθαι ἐνεργοῦντες καὶ διορθοῦντες ἀλλήλους· ἀπομάττονται γὰρ παρ' ἀλλήλων οἷς ἀρέσκονται, ὅθεν "ἐσθλῶν μὲν γὰρ ἄπ' ἐσθλά". (*NE* IX.12 1172a11-14)
>
> And so it happens that the friendship of bad people is bad. For they share bad things and are unstable, and they become thoroughly bad in coming to be like each other (ὁμοιούμενοι). But the friendship of good people is good, since it continues to develop as they associate, and they seem to become even better people through their activity by mutual correction, since they copy each other in what they find pleasing, which is the source of the saying, 'noble things from noble men'. (*NE* IX.12 1172a11-14)[179]

What happens when bad people become friends? – Reciprocal shaping: both friends coming to be *like* (ὁμοιούμενοι) each other. Obviously we can see why this would be a

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[177] See *NE* VIII.2 1155b27-1156a6.

[178] Konstan's very awkward translation of *allos autos* as "another selfsame" is actually quite appropriate (see Konstan 2001, 198).

[179] Cf. *NE* VIII.5 1157b21-25, where it is implied that "enjoying the same things" is necessary for friendship.

bad thing among the base, but it is of course a fine and proper thing among good people, for they come to be like each other in goodness of character. The key terms in the above passage - ἐνεργοῦντες, διορθοῦντες, ἀπομάττονται – poignantly evoke how friends mold and sculpt each other's character and come to be like one another ("they copy each other in what they find pleasing"), something to be expected over the course of sharing their lives with each other in a friendship.[180] And living together with a friend provides for, as Aristotle says, a "training ground for virtue" (γίνοιτο δ' ἂν καὶ ἄσκησίς τις τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐκ τοῦ συζῆν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς).[181]

The fact that the unity is reciprocally shaped is quite crucial, for it is not merely sameness in character traits that epitomizes friendship. It is also, crucially, the fact that friends mold those traits into each other over the course of shared living. It is by this molding that each friend shapes his own self into the other. As a result of this reciprocal shaping, friends develop mutually shared interests, viewpoints, etc. that only could have developed from such reciprocal shaping as it took place in their friendship.[182] In this way, friends owe the value of their lives to each other. So while friends are numerically separate, the *eudaimonia* of one friend is *not* separate from that of the other.[183]

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[180] Burnet (1990, 436) notes that ἀπομάττονται "is properly used of wax taking the impress of a seal." Grant (1885, 311) translates: 'For they take the stamp of one another in those things which they like.'

[181] *NE* IX.9 1170a11-12. He actually attributes this saying to Theognis, but he clearly agrees with it.

[182] That the shaping is reciprocal is significant, as I have been stressing, for it shows why the friendship of unequals is unequal. In a father-son relationship, for Aristotle, the shaping only goes one way (father to son).

[183] Given just how strong of a conception of friendship this is, and how it culminates in IX.9, it is worth mentioning that in the very next chapter – IX.10 – Aristotle raises the question of how many friends one can and should have. He doesn't give a number, but comes very close to saying that if there is a number, it might just be one. He compares friendship to romantic love (ἐρᾶν), noting that romantic love is for one person (*NE* IX.10 1171a12-15).

2.3.3. Three Kinds of Shaping

In this section I attempt to flesh out the notion of reciprocal shaping and elaborate on its significance. There are many ways in which we may understand Aristotle's claim that friends "seem to become even better people through their activity (ἐνεργοῦντες) by mutual correction (διορθοῦντες), since they copy each other in what they find pleasing (ἀπομάττονται)" (*NE* IX.12 1172a11-14). I suggest that it implies three different kinds of shaping: Simple, Complex, and Evaluative. I explain each of these in what follows.

(i) *Simple Shaping*

Simple shaping is just the passing on of a character trait from one friend to another. John has, say, trait A and Sally has trait B. After reciprocal *simple* shaping, John has A and B and Sally has A and B. Suppose John loves the game of tennis while Sally loves the game of baseball. Through the friendship, John comes to love baseball, and Sally comes to love tennis. This sort of shaping is significant, and important, and contributes to the formation of affective unity, but it is not the only sort of shaping that happens in a friendship.

(ii) *Complex Shaping*

Complex shaping happens when the traits that each friend has interact with each other in such a way that new, mutually shared, traits are formed. So, together through συζῆν, John and Sally develop a love for things that each of them might have had no real interest in before. Together, they arrive at views about social, moral, political, religious, etc. matters that neither of them really held previously. These shared features develop

spontaneously, though surely because of the traits that each brought to the friendship at its inception, and because of the shaping that took place over time.[184]

Complex shaping is significant because it strengthens the actual unity and the feelings of unity that exist between friends. If simple shaping were all that existed between friends, then it would possibly be easy for each friend to draw a sharp distinction (implicitly or explicitly) between the ways in which he has shaped the other, and the ways in which the other has shaped him. Although simple shaping makes for shared traits, it does not do it in the same way as complex shaping. With simple shaping, John is responsible for Sally's new trait X. But with complex shaping, both John and Sally are equally responsible for their new traits Y and Z, traits that are themselves partly the result of the previously existing traits interacting. This creates for greater unity and greater feelings of unity between friends and makes it more difficult to distinguish between the ways in which one has shaped the other and the ways in which the other has shaped oneself. It starts to be and feel more like the mutual creation of a new, shared self.

(iii) *Evaluative Shaping*

Evaluative shaping does not entail the shaping of traits into a friend, but rather entails shaping the value that some trait has to a friend. It is when I take an active role in helping my friend come to truly understand, or to better understand, the value that his various activities and pursuits have to him. Evaluative shaping may pertain to the traits

[184] There is obviously the question of just how much sameness needs to exist between friends for it to be the case that they are a single soul. I address this question in section 3.2 after showing how the single-soul view solves the problem of motivation.

that arose from simple shaping, and also the traits that arose from complex shaping.[185] Suppose Dave, a musician, has a friendship with Boyd, a novelist, and let's grant that some simple shaping has occurred so that Boyd has acquired a love of music and Dave has acquired a love of literature. Each may now play an active role in helping the other come to understand the value that music and literature has in his life. Due to Boyd's influence, Dave has a better understanding of his own valuing of music and why it is important to him. Likewise – Boyd, because of Dave's influence, has a better understanding of his own valuing of being a novelist and why it is important to him. So now, music gives value to Dave's life in a new kind of way, *in a way that he owes to Boyd.* Likewise, being a novelist now gives value to Boyd's life in a new kind of a way, *in a way that he owes to Dave.* And most importantly, evaluative shaping leads both Dave and Boyd to realize that their respective pursuits are more valuable when *shared.* Because evaluative shaping may pertain to any and all of the traits that exist in a friendship, it fuses through the entire friendship and binds the value of one life to another.

We ought to think of the single soul, then, as a reciprocally shaped affective unity. What happens as a result of this reciprocal shaping is that there exist good-making features of my life that I owe to my friend, and good-making features of my friend's life that he owes to me, and good-making features of each of our lives that we owe to each other, and that therefore there exist good-making features of the friendship and life that we share, features for which we are both responsible. We can say of those features that "they are ours" and not merely "these are mine and those are yours" precisely because of

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[185] It may also pertain to traits that were not shaped at all, a point I will discuss later when considering certain objections.

the fact that they have been reciprocally shaped. This bundle of reciprocally shaped features *is* what *we* are, *qua* friends.

The most significant of the traits to be reciprocally shaped are those character traits that are the virtues themselves. Thus, friendship provides a "training ground for virtue", as Aristotle claims.[186] Sharing in conversation and thought leads to, among other things, the right conception of the mean in a given set of circumstances and a shared conception of the good life. This may seem problematic if we think that Aristotelian character-friendship requires the pre-existence of virtue in friends. But this is not a serious problem. The road to complete virtue is a long one, and Aristotle thinks that friendship is a necessary part of that journey. Aristotle importantly distinguishes between "natural virtue" (ἡ φυσικὴ ἀρετή) and "complete virtue" (κυρίως ἀρετή) (*NE* VI.13 1144b1-1145a1). Someone who has natural virtue is disposed to be virtuous, but he lacks understanding (νοῦς) of what makes something a virtue and of what makes actions right in the context of their circumstances (*NE* VI.13 1144b12-17). Natural virtue and a commitment to virtue may need to pre-exist in each friend, but it is the friendship itself that takes each friend to complete virtue. Otherwise, what "training ground" for virtue could friendship provide?

In the next section I attempt to probe deeper into the metaphysics of the single soul. In particular, I attempt to elaborate on the claim that friends "mold their selves" into one another. This is true in a literal sense, but it does not imply that friends are numerically one. As well, I anticipate certain other objections to be discussed in Section 3 when I show how the single-soul view solves the problem of motivation.

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[186] *NE* IX.9 1170a11-12.

2.3.4. The Metaphysics of the Single Soul

Because affective unity explicitly countenances numerical distinctness between friends, my view should able to avoid certain metaphysical worries that would result from the view that friends are, say, a single substance. So questions of the sort: "If I am at my computer, but my friend is playing tennis, am I actually playing tennis?" should not pose serious concern. Yet, I claim that friends mold their selves into one another, and I take seriously Aristotle's claim in the IX.7 argument that my friend *is* the actualized me. At this point, it would be worthwhile to discuss Aristotle's use of qualifiers like πως and παραπλησίως in the key claims of key passages we have discussed. Consider once more the *NE* IX.7 argument.

> 1) Existing is, for everyone, worth choosing and lovable.
>
> 2) It is by our actuality that we exist, since we exist by living and acting.
>
> 3) The work is, somehow, its maker in actuality. (ἐνεργείᾳ δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστι πως·)
>
> 4) Hence, he is fond of his work – for the reason that (διότι) he loves existing. And this is natural, because what he is potentially, his work reveals in actuality. (*NE* IX.7 1168a5-8)

Step 3) of the argument, and the conclusion 4), are particularly crucial here. Take 3): ἐνεργείᾳ δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστι πως. The Greek does not make entirely clear whether τὸ ἔργον should be read as a predicate nominative or as an accusative direct object of ὁ ποιήσας. If we read it as an accusative direct object, the sentence would have to be translated, "The person making the product exists in actuality, as it were." As Pakaluk notes, this would not support the inference to 4) – that the maker is fond of his work because what he is in potential, the work is in actuality. So I have treated τὸ ἔργον

as a nominative, reading the ἔστι as copulative, thus translating, "The product *is* its maker in actuality, as it were."[187]

But there is an important question of how exactly to understand the "as it were" part of that sentence - the πως in ἐνεργείᾳ δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστι πως at IX.7 1168a5-7, and for that matter also the παραπλησίως in καθάπερ οὖν τὸ αὐτὸν εἶναι αἱρετὸν ἐστιν ἑκάστῳ, οὕτω καὶ τὸ τὸν φίλον, ἢ παραπλησίως at IX.9 1170b7-8. In each of these sentences, we have Aristotle making very strong claims: 1) That my friend *is* me actualized, and 2) that my friend's existence is choiceworthy *in the same way* as my own existence (which would make sense, since he is me actualized). That he qualifies these statements with πως and παραπλησίως might cause one to think that he does not mean those claims as strongly as they sound. That Aristotle makes use of those qualifiers is, I think, an indication that he is aware of just how strong his claims are, and that he *does* mean to limit their meaning but is perhaps unsure at this point exactly how to articulate and explain fully what he means.[188] I think that we *should* read those qualifiers as limiting the meanings of the claims, but only in the following sense: the qualifiers preserve numerical distinctness between friends. That is, we should read each of them as saying: "...but this does not mean that friends are not numerically distinct. They are still numerically distinct." So, while friends are the same in a way, there is also a way in which they are not the same, which is that they are numerically distinct. Importantly, we find a very similar usage of πως in *EE* VII.12: "Therefore, to perceive a friend must be in a way (πως) to perceive one's self and to know a friend to know one's self" (*EE*

[187] My rendering is not uncommon, and is supported by the following translations: Pakaluk (1998), Irwin (1999), Ross (in Barnes 1984), Broadie and Rowe (2002). Burnet, in his commentary, also understands the sentence to mean that the product is the producer actualized (1900, 420).

[188] Credit goes to Professor Mackie for suggesting that the point be put in this way.

1245a35). Here is an elaborate translation of πως as it occurs in that sentence: "In a way, but not in a way that suggests that friends are numerically one."

But if those claims do not imply numerical oneness, we must then explain how exactly they ought to be read. Just what do they mean? The account of reciprocally shaped affective unity answers this question. To begin, let us take the claim that my friend is the actualized me. It was argued in section 2.1 that a person is most of all his thinking part – his *nous* – and that this means that *nous* is most of all the self. *Nous,* it was shown, requires other beings in order to actualize itself. If a human life is essentially a life of reasoning and thinking (which it is, for Aristotle), then *nous* must engage with the outside world in order to actualize its potential – in order to become what it is. As Aristotle says, "It is by our actuality that we exist, since we exist by living and acting" (*NE* IX.7 1168a6-8); and "living seems to be strictly perceiving and thinking" (*NE* IX.9 1170a19). When *nous* lives and acts and thinks and perceives with a friend – with another *nous* – something happens that is both cognitive and ethical, namely - reciprocal shaping. Every kind of shaping – simple, complex, and evaluative - requires *nous.* It requires thinking and reasoning, reasoning practically, and judging with a friend. This is why Aristotle emphasizes sharing in conversation and *thought* and that *sunaisthanesthai* results from it (*NE* IX.9 1170b11). When I convince my friend that, say, some course of action is the right course of action to take, or that some activity is truly valuable and that he ought to engage in it, his character changes in a way for which I am (partly) responsible.

In this way, my *nous* – my self - has been actualized in him. My reasoning and thinking activity and its results are visible in full bloom in him. He is not the same as me

numerically, but he is my noetic extension (and, importantly, I am his[189]). He *is* my actuality in the following sense: There are certain things that he will do, certain things that he will like, certain ways in general that he will behave, *because* of the way I have shaped him. In that way, it is as if I am doing those things, liking those things, and behaving in those ways too, because they are things that have resulted from my reasoning too. This will not hold true of everything that we do and like. It is not because of my character friend, for instance, that I am sitting at the desk rather than lying on the couch. But I am perpetually in a state in which, potentially, I can do something that I only would have done as a result of being shaped by my friend – something that I only would have done *qua* noetic extension of my friend. This is why Aristotle sees fit to compare friend and friend to maker and product, and to claim that the later *is* the former. So while πως may limit the meaning of the claim in the sense of not implying that my friend and I are numerically one, the claim is still quite strong. Once reciprocal shaping creates for affective unity, the perceptual claims in *NE* IX.9 and *EE* VII.12 become easier to understand. Since we possess that unity, it is easy to perceive my friend and myself together as one, *as if* a numerically single self (*NE* IX.9). Perceiving my friend is, in a way, to perceive myself, since my friend is my noetic extension (*EE* VII.12). As the author of the *Magna Moralia* says, "just as when we wish to see our own face, we do so by looking in a mirror, in the same way when we wish to know ourselves we can obtain that knowledge by looking at our friend. For the friend is, as we assert, a second self" (*MM* II.15a20-24). And all of this is true vice versa, i.e. true of my friend with respect to me.

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[189] All of this holds vice versa, a point that must be kept in mind.

There are, I recognize, some remaining problems with this account that have not yet been addressed. There are two main problems, both very closely related and probably better seen as parts of a single problem. I have not committed the foregoing account to a view about just how many features need to be reciprocally shaped in order for two people to count as friends. The account so far might seem to have the implication that friends need to be almost exact replicas of each other as far as personality traits, characteristics, and affections go. This would seem problematic because it seems a) undesirable, and b) at any rate not possible. And besides – and this is the second closely related problem – a friendship would seem to only occupy a part of a person's life, not all of it. My account seems to treat a friendship as if it must be the one essential feature of a human being.

Those problems are intimately related to how the single-soul view goes about solving the problem motivation. It will be better to address them once we see exactly how the single-soul view solves the problem.

3. Solving the Problem of Motivation

The single-soul view is able to reconcile two intuitions that we have about friendship that pull in opposite directions. On the one hand, friends are supposed to have a disinterested concern for each other as distinct, separate beings. Friendship is supposed to have that purely other-regarding flavor that Annas and Whiting tried hard to read into Aristotle's account. Friendship is not supposed to be selfish. But on the other hand, true friends are dearly close to one another in a way that undermines the first intuition. True friends think of themselves as connected in a way that undermines both purely other-regarding feelings and thinking of friends as distinct and separate. This is why, on my

view, Aristotle recognizes the validity of *both* the self-regarding *and* the other-regarding motive when we act on behalf of our friends. And I have put forth the account of reciprocal shaping as what explains the fact that friends think of each other as so connected and not distinct and separate.

Some commentators on Aristotle have, in one way or another, highlighted Aristotle's view that friends are a kind of unity in an effort to show that he regarded the dichotomy of egoism and altruism as a false one. Thus Sherman writes: "For if friendship extends the self, then one is not so much sacrificing oneself, as acting in the interests of this new extended self" (1987, 608). Similarly, Price writes: "One and the same act may count as contributing, as a constituent and not a cause, to the *eudaimonia* of two persons. It is this possibility that grounds Aristotle's ideal of friendship. In that it dissolves the obstinate dichotomy between egoism and altruism, it may attract us" (1990, 106).[190] The view that I argue for in this chapter is found to some degree in the work of these commentators, insofar as all of these commentators appeal to the idea of Aristotelian friends as a kind of unity. I have tried to make explicit just what type of unity that is, and I now want to explicitly draw out its motivational implications.

In the effort of drawing out those implications, let us distinguish between the following kinds of attitude that one might have toward his friend in a friendship. Each of these attitudes provides an answer to the question: "Why do you love and benefit your friend?"

1. **The I-Attitude:** My happiness includes the happiness of my friend, and so my happiness requires that I love and benefit my friend.

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[190] See also Kahn (1981, 39) and Madigan (1985).

2. **The Non-I Attitude:** Friendship requires of me that I love and benefit my friend with no thought of how that relates to my own happiness.

3. **The I and Non-I Attitude:** My happiness requires that I love and benefit my friend, and also friendship requires of me that I love and benefit my friend independently of how that relates to my own happiness. I love and benefit him both for my sake and for his sake.

4. **The We-Attitude:** I conceive of my friend and I as a unit that loves and benefits itself. When I benefit my friend, what motivates me is the thought that this is what *we* need, with the "we" being irreducible to what I need and what my friend needs separately. We give no thought to the idea that we are distinct and separate, for we are not. We are a single soul.

We recognize the first three of these attitudes from the solutions to the problem of motivation that we considered in Chapter II. So, the I-Attitude is that which is present in the constitutive solution, the Non-I Attitude in unintentional self-love, and the 'I and Non-I Attitude' in overdetermination.

Now, one way of solving the problem of motivation via the account of the single soul is by arguing that the account of the single soul justifies the I-Attitude. I have claimed, after all, that the single-soul view can be thought of as providing a foundation for the constitutive solution. The problem of motivation, recall, arises when we ask how self-regarding and other-regarding motives are related when they coexist in a person. According to the constitutive view, the two motives converge such that a friend is valued for his own sake precisely insofar as he is valued as an essential constituent part of one's own happiness. This was found to be morally objectionable, because it committed Aristotle to the seemingly unpalatable view that friends essentially are constituent parts of the happiness of each other. As Milgram griped: "It seems to me that self-love is playing too great, and the wrong kind of, a role. As Robert Frost puts it in his poem, 'Hyla Brook': 'We love the things we love for what they are' – not for what we have

made them" (1987, 376). But we see now that Aristotle can plausibly respond that Milgram's objection is confused. For Aristotle argues that, in and through friendship, we *are* precisely *what we have made each other to be.* So, one answer to Pakaluk's query[191] of how loving a friend on account of the friend being one's own *energeia* can be compatible with loving him on account of himself is simply that my friend *is, qua* friend, my own *energeia,* so by loving him insofar as he is that, I am loving him for what he is.[192]

But I think that the single soul view implies an even better answer than that. What I want to argue is that the account of the single soul that I have given is what both explains and justifies the existence of the We-Attitude. In doing this, it can still be thought of as providing a foundation for the constitutive solution for the following reason: It explains how the *eudaimonia* of each friend becomes mutually shaped by each friend and intertwined with the *eudaimonia* of the other. But since there is that shaping and intertwining, it's the We-Attitude that should be present rather than the I-Attitude. And Aristotle does think that the We-Attitude will be present, for friends perceive the being of each other together as one (συναισθάνεσθαι). They cognize themselves as a unit.

3.1. 'We', 'Ours', and 'Us'

Due to the reciprocal shaping that has occurred over the course of shared living, the self of each friend has been made by both friends. And because of this, each friend

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[191] Pakaluk (1998, 187).

[192] Remember that we are no longer working with the standard sense of valuing something for its own sake. Rather, for Aristotle, to value X for its own sake – for itself - is to value X for what X is.

can say of both his and his friend's numerically distinct but qualitatively identical self, "*This* is *ours,*" or "*This* is *us.*" To make this clearer, imagine two friends, Sam and Max, and suppose that they are reciprocally shaped affective unities. Now, suppose Sam has the following attitude: "I love Max only on account of the fact that he is what I have made him to be, only on account of his being my actuality. And I love him for his own sake – for himself – since he *is* what I have made him to be." I make two claims about this: 1) As a matter of fact, Sam won't have this attitude because of the nature of reciprocal shaping; 2) Sam would not be justified in having this attitude because of the nature of reciprocal shaping.

Why won't Sam have that attitude exactly? If the only kind of shaping that had taken place between Sam and Max were simple shaping, then he very well might have that attitude. He might, then, love Max only insofar as he has made Max like him. But this is where complex and evaluative shaping come into play. The traits that arise from complex shaping are new traits that did not pre-exist the friendship – traits that each friend had an equal part in forming. But they develop out of the interaction of the character traits already present in each friend, traits many of which were the result of simple shaping. Now the boundaries of the ways in which Sam has shaped Max and the ways in which Max has shaped Sam begin to be blurred, for as Sam shapes Max' character, he does so in part based on how he had already been shaped by Max (and vice versa), who had done so in part based on how he had already been shaped by Sam, who had done so in part based on how he had already been shaped by Max, *ad infinitum.* The friendship begins to be and feel more like "we" and less like an "I" and "you". And this is intensified by evaluative shaping, for it is through that kind of shaping that friends

begin to realize that they owe the value of their lives to each other. This explains why Sam won't have the I-Attitude, but rather will have the We-Attitude.

But not only does reciprocal shaping explain why Sam will have the We-Attitude, it justifies his having that attitude as well. For as Sam shapes Max's character, it is in a way Max's actuality coming back at Max himself to shape him, and vice versa. And in this way, each self is the actualization of both Sam and Max. So as Sam gazes at Max, he cannot just say, "That's me, and that's why I love Max." That would show a lack of awareness of what he truly is, and of what Max truly is. What he really ought to say is, "That's *us,* and that's why *we* love *us.*" As Sam loves Max on account of Max being his own actuality, he must recognize that Max is not merely that. Since Sam is the actualized Max, Max is the actuality of both Sam and Max. And since Max is the actualized Sam, Sam is the actuality of both Max and Sam.

I offer an analogy to illustrate the previous point: two notes on a piano merging to form a chord. So, suppose C and E decided one day to become friends. C has now shaped E so that E has become the chord – the major third – CE. And *vice versa* – E has shaped C so that C has also become the chord CE. But the chord that is formed now makes a new sound, a sound that is not reducible to each individual note. The sound of CE is not reducible to the C-ness of CE, nor is it reducible to the E-ness of CE. *Yet,* each note remains. So now we have two numerically distinct entities: the CE that was originally C, and the CE that was originally E. Call these CE^C and CE^E. The point relevant for the case of Sam and Max is that CE^C would not be justified in loving CE^E merely insofar as CE^E has C-ness. Since they have each become the whole chord, the notes must love each other on account of that, if indeed they love what each truly is. In

the same way, Max and Sam now love each other on account of the whole self that is present in both of them that they have each created. It is a whole self that is irreducible to the pre-friendship Max and the pre-friendship Sam, and what accounts for this are all three kinds of shaping of reciprocal shaping.

What I have argued is that the recognition that I am what my friend has made me to be just as much as he is what I have made him to be places a sort of constraint on my motivation when valuing and benefiting him. With all three kinds of shaping, the recognition causes us to have the We-Attitude – to think of ourselves as a unit that loves and benefits itself, with no thought of separation or distinctness. We perceive our beings together as one (συναισθάνεσθαι). But it also justifies that attitude since each friend can say of both his and his friend's numerically distinct but qualitatively identical self, "*This* is *ours,*" or "*This* is *us.*" In this way, reciprocal shaping creates for a kind of *we*-desires in friendship. In order to see this, it will be helpful to first consider Bernard Williams' distinction between I-desires and non-I-desires.[193] The propositional content of any desire, whether 'I' or 'non-I', is given by spelling out the desire in the form 'I want that *p*'. For an I-desire, *p* is filled in by some 'I' or related expression ('my', etc.). For a non-I-desire, *p* is not filled in by any 'I' related expression. For example: 'I want that my happiness be fulfilled', is an I-desire, whereas 'I want that my friend prosper', is a non-I-desire. As Williams explains, for the egoist, there can be no non-I-desires that do not depend on some I-desire. For the altruist, there can be independent non-I-desires.[194] Aristotle's view, when it comes to friendship, is *not* that all non-I-desires depend on I-desires, *nor* is his view that friendship requires independent non-I-desires. Rather, when

[193] Williams (1973, 260-1).

[194] Williams is speaking of the psychological theses of egoism and altruism here, not the normative theses.

I desire that my friend prosper, I think of this desire as *our* desire – as the desire of the unity that is us. Now, in a way, friends project this onto the relationship, since friends are not numerically one. But there is something real that underlies it and justifies the friends' thinking of it in that way. I elaborate on this in what follows.

Here is how we get a kind of "we-desires" out of reciprocal shaping. Suppose Sam desires that Max prosper. This is a desire that Sam has as a result of the reciprocal shaping that has taken place in his friendship with Max. It is a desire he would not possess had Sam not shaped him in the way that he did. Sam must recognize this, and because Sam knows that to value something for itself is to value it for what it is, he must value himself on account of him being Max's actuality. He therefore must recognize that his desire that Max prosper is not just his desire, but Max's desire as well. In what sense is it also Max's desire? In a rather strong sense, for I am not merely talking about a desire-type here, but the very token desire that Sam has that Max prosper. This very token desire is also Max's desire in the sense that it is a desire that Max would have, and it is a desire that Sam has only because of how he was shaped by Max. That is, it is a desire that Sam has in virtue of being the actualized Max. It is a desire of the numerically distinct self (Sam) that has been created by both Max and Sam, and it is a desire that would not exist if not for the fact that the numerically distinct self that is Sam had not been created by both Max and Sam. *Furthermore,* it is a desire for the well-being of the numerically distinct self (Max) that has been created by both Sam and Max. Reciprocal shaping, therefore, countenances <u>The We-Desire Principle</u>:

> Let A and B stand for reciprocally shaped friends.
>
> Let φ stand for the desire that B prosper.

Suppose A φ's (A desires that B prosper.)

φ is a We-Desire iff:
- i) φ is also B's desire
- ii) φ is also a desire that A prosper.

i) is true iff:
- 1) A is B's actualized self.
- 2) φ is a desire that B would have.
- 3) A has φ because of how he has been shaped by B.

ii) is true iff:
- 1) B is A's actualized self.

In this way, when I desire that my friend prosper, *we* desire that *we* prosper.

I want now to reconsider the passages from Chapter II that originally seemed to be morally objectionable. Consider once again the argument of IX.4, which attempts to justify Aristotle's conditions for friendship. He justifies them by claiming that those same conditions are found in the virtuous person's relation to himself, and that a friend is another self. Here, again, is the argument:[195]

> 1. Each of the features of friendship belongs to the good person in relation to himself. (τῷ δὴ πρὸς αὑτὸν ἕκαστα τούτων ὑπάρχειν τῷ ἐπιεικεῖ)
>
> 2. The good person is related to his friend just as he is related to himself. (πρὸς δὲ τὸν φίλον ἔχειν ὥσπερ πρὸς αὑτόν)
>
> > 2a. (Premise in support of 2). A friend is another self. (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός)
>
> 3. Conclusion: The features of friendship under consideration are the correct ones, and those to whom these features belong are friends. (καὶ ἡ φιλία τούτων εἶναι τι δοκεῖ, καὶ φίλοι οἷς ταῦθ' ὑπάρκει)

By calling attention to the *gar* in 2a, I argued in Chapter II against Annas that the other-self claim must be doing more than just restating premise 2. Rather, it *explains* the truth of premise 2. But this created a problem, for it seemed that according to this argument,

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[195] *NE* IX.4 1166a29-34.

what motivates me to value my friend is the fact that I see myself in him. This a) seems narcissistic and objectionable, and b) is incompatible with valuing a friend for his own sake.

But if we read the other-self claim in IX.4 as anticipating the single-soul view developed in IX.7, IX.9, and IX.12, the objectionable features of the argument may be dissolved. Notice how both 2 and 2a appear again in the argument from nature in IX.9. But in that argument, Aristotle adds to those claims with his appeal to the value of higher-order perception, and with his claim that one must perceive one's own existence and the existence of one's friend together as one (συναισθάνεσθαι). If what it means for friends to be other selves to one another is for them to be a reciprocally shaped affective unity, then it is not that I value my friend because it is a way of valuing myself, because after all, these are *our*selves that *we* have formed. I am as much "self" as I am "other self", and because of this when I value my friend, it is the mutually formed unity that is valuing itself.

At the beginning of IX.8, Aristotle asks whether the virtuous person should love himself or someone else most of all, and without qualms concludes that he should love himself most of all. In support of this claim, he offers basically the same argument that he gave in IX.4 – that the features of friendship are so because they are found in the virtuous person's relation to himself.

> But a friend is most of all someone who wishes, or someone to whom are wished, good things for that person's sake, even if no one will know; but these belong most of all to a person in relation to himself; and so all the remaining things by which a friend is defined, since we have said that it is from oneself that all the characteristics of friendship extend additionally to others. And all the proverbs agree, for instance, 'a single soul'[196],

[196] Diogenes Laertius reports of Aristotle that: "To the query, 'What is a friend?' his reply was, 'A single soul dwelling in two bodies'" (D.L. 5.20).

> 'friends' things are in common', 'friendship is equality', and 'the knee is closer than the shin' – since all of these would apply most of all to a person in relation to oneself. *For he most of all is a friend to himself; so he should also love himself most of all* (*NE* IX.8 1168b3-11; my emphasis).

Now, just because I love myself most of all does not mean that I cannot therefore love someone else independently of the love that I have for myself.[197] Still, the above passage does not rest comfortably in an account of friendship, and one cannot deny that in the above passage Aristotle makes it seem as though when push comes to shove, the virtuous person will favor his own interests over those of his friend. But if Aristotle envisions the best kind of friendship as a reciprocally shaped affective unity, as I have argued, then the claim that the virtuous person should love himself most of all is innocuous, for in loving himself most of all, he is loving the self that is the actuality of both he and his friend. He must love his other self as much as he loves himself.

But Aristotle's remarks in IX.8, particularly where he claims that the agent benefits his friend because he prefers doing what is noble (*kalon*) might seem problematic for different reasons. The relevant passage is 1169a18-30 where Aristotle describes what motivates the virtuous agent to act on behalf of his friend, especially the final four lines of the passage:

> καὶ χρήματα προοῖντ' ἂν ἐφ' ᾧ πλείονα λήψονται οἱ φίλοι· γίνεται γὰρ τῷ μὲν φίλῳ χρήματα, αὐτῷ δὲ τὸ καλόν· τὸ δὴ μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀπονέμει.

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[197] On this point see McKerlie (1998, 543), who is quite comfortable with claiming that Aristotle's view is that (a) the virtuous person cares for himself more than he cares for his friend, but that (b) the concern he has for his friend is independent of the concern he has for himself, and (c) though he cares for himself more, he will sacrifice himself for the good of his friend. The problem here is not so much with (a) combined with (b), but with (a) combined with (c). If Aristotle endorses (a) and (c), he owes us an explanation for the truth of (c). If the explanation is that such sacrifices are really self-loving acts since the agent attains the *kalon*, which is clearly what it is, then such sacrifices are not really sacrifices.

> And he gives up money on condition that his friends receive more, since the friend gets money, but he gets what is noble; thus he assigns the greater good to himself.

The problem here is that Aristotle appears to be saying that I help my friend because of something *I* want to achieve *for myself.* In addition, it might seem that he is clearly distinguishing between the interests of one friend and the interests of the other friend in a way that undermines the possibility of a we-desire. He speaks, after all, of the agent assigning the greater good to himself (τὸ δὴ μεῖζον ἀγαθὸν ἑαυτῷ ἀπονέμει). This claim – that the agent assigns the greater good to himself when he comes to the aid of his friend – is underwritten by a passage in IX.7:[198]

> ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῷ μὲν εὐεργέτῃ καλὸν τὸ κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν, ὥστε χαίρειν ἐν ᾧ τοῦτο, τῷ δὲ παθόντι οὐδὲν καλὸν ἐν τῷ δράσαντι, ἀλλ᾽ εἴπερ, συμφέρον: τοῦτο δ᾽ ἧττον ἡδὺ καὶ φιλητόν.
>
> And at the same time, for the benefactor, what is in accordance with his action is noble; as a consequence, he takes pleasure in the person in whom this [is found]; but for the one treated well, there is nothing noble in the agent, but if anything, something advantageous; yet this is less pleasant and less lovable. (*NE* 1166a9-12)

This passage, along with IX.8, gives the impression that Aristotle thinks that the virtuous agent grants a certain priority to, and acts for the sake of, a good that is independent of, separate from, and other than the friend's good. But I do not think that the passages in question need have this implication.

First we must note that in the IX.8 passage above, Aristotle is *not* distinguishing between two different reasons why one might come to the aid of a friend. That is, he is not saying one reason is that the friend needs the aid, while the other reason is attaining the noble, and then coming firmly down on one side saying that the agent benefits his friend because he wants the noble for himself. A closer reading shows that Aristotle is

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[198] As noted by Pakaluk (1998, 183).

highlighting a different contrast. The *men...de* construction in γίνεται γὰρ τῷ μὲν φίλῳ χρήματα, αὐτῷ δὲ τὸ καλόν· clearly does denote a contrast, but it is not contrasting different reasons or motives for performing the same action. That is, Aristotle is not implying that the agent *could* be motivated to help his friend simply because his friend needs the money, but instead is motivated to help his friend out of a desire for nobility. Rather, Aristotle is making the point that the agent prefers helping his friend to keeping his own money. We may grant that the virtuous agent's end is nobility, but we ought to distinguish between what counts as a means to that end and what counts as constitutive of that end. The act of benefiting a friend, I would argue, is constitutive of nobility rather than an instrumental means to nobility. So, yes, the agent assigns himself the greater good rather than assigning himself the inferior good of money. But that greater good *just is* the noble securing of his friend's well-being, and it is this that the agent prefers.

Also, just after noting that the agent prefers nobility to all else in the IX.8 passage, Aristotle says: ἐνδέχεται δὲ καὶ πράξεις τῷ φίλῳ προίεσθαι, καὶ εἶναι κάλλιον τοῦ αὐτὸν πράξαι τὸ αἴτιον τῷ φίλῳ γενέσθαι. "It is possible to give up actions too, for a friend, and it is possible that it be nobler to become the cause of a friend's acting than to act oneself" (*NE* IX.8 1169a32-35). For the most part, commentators have taken Aristotle in this sentence to be making the simple point that when the agent has an opportunity to do something virtuous, he can forgo the opportunity and let his friend take on the action instead. The sentence might have that implication, but it surely has another implication that is easy to overlook, namely that simply by being the cause of a friend's

acting nobly, one achieves nobility.[199] When I come to the aid of my friend and give him the money that he needs (to stick with Aristotle's example), simultaneously he is the cause of my acting. This provides for an amendment to the IX.7 passage just quoted, for it turns out that there *can* be something noble in the benefactor (the "agent") for the beneficiary (the "one treated well"), rather than just something advantageous.[200]

There is a difficulty in understanding the passage in this way, for we may rather want to say that the friend who needs the money provides the *occasion* for the benefaction of the other friend, not that he is the *cause* of the benefaction. But given the virtuous person's attitude toward nobility, and given that character-friendship is between two virtuous individuals, I think there can be times when the beneficiary should be thought of as the cause rather than the mere occasion. Consider what Montaigne has to say about this. In his essay "Of Friendship", Montaigne speaks at length of the kind of friendship he had with Étienne de la Boétie. He too thinks that true friends are a kind of unity, so much so that he arrives at a view even more extreme than the one I am attributing to Aristotle:

> So the union of such friends, being truly perfect, makes them lose the sense of such duties, and hate and banish from between them these words of separation and distinction: benefit, obligation, gratitude, request, thanks, and the like. Everything actually being in common between them - wills, thoughts, judgments, goods, wives, children, honor, and life - their relationship being that of one soul in two bodies, according to Aristotle's

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[199] Grant (1885, 300) and Stern-Gillet (1995, 121) only recognize the first implication. Pakaluk (1998), Irwin (1999), Joachim (1951), Burnet (1900), and Broadie and Rowe (2002) have nothing to say about the implications of the claim.

[200] See Price (1990, 117) for a similar view: "...the activity of each part can be viewed as the exercise at once of a capacity of his own, and of a capacity (whether similar or complementary) of the other's; hence the activity of each is not only himself, but also the other, in action."

> very apt definition, they can neither lend nor give anything to each other. (Pakaluk 1991, 194)[201]

As you can see, Montaigne does not even think that the notion of "benefit" meaningfully applies to the kind of friendship he is talking about.

However, Montaigne goes on to say that *if,* in the friendship he speaks of, one *could* give to the other, "it would be the one who received the benefit who would oblige his friend. For each of them seeking above all things to benefit the other, the one who provides the matter and the occasion is the liberal one, giving his friend the satisfaction of doing for him what he most wants to do" (Pakaluk 1991, 195). What I understand Montaigne to be saying here is that I become the cause of my friend's giving precisely insofar as I make myself the matter and the occasion for my friend's giving. I see no reason why this idea cannot be applied to the IX.8 passage.

To sum up, when one friend acts on behalf of another and sacrifices money for the sake of his safety, there are two things we must note about this action: 1) The friend is not primarily after nobility and only secondarily seeking the well-being of his friend. Rather, it is the noble securing of the well-being of his friend that he desires. 2) Aristotle should allow that the beneficiary, in being the occasion of the benefaction, is in a way the cause of it, since he gives his friend the satisfaction of doing what he most wants to do. In this way each friend shares in the nobility of the action, since Aristotle holds that it is noble to be the cause of one's friend's virtuous actions. The IX.8 passage, therefore, need not have the implication that one numerically distinct friend fails to properly value the other.

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[201] For the record, even among friends who may be a single soul, I do not endorse the having of wives and children in common.

3.2. The Separateness of Persons Objection

I return in this section to the set of problems that I anticipated at the very end of Section 2. First, how much affective unity does the foregoing account require? This has not been made clear, and it might seem that it requires near one hundred percent sameness in traits and properties. Second, my interpretation of Aristotle seems to treat friendship as if it encompasses the entirety of a friend's life, when clearly friendship makes up just a part of a friend's life. We see objections like this voiced by Benson, who accuses Aristotle of neglecting a distinctively valuable aspect of friendship:

> The aspect I mean is the separateness of persons, the fact that friends remain, however close they become, individuals with particular ends as well as joint ones, whose shared subjective viewpoint with its single personal perspective (the 'single soul') is the more or less precarious achievement of conversation and joint activity... The friends remain, within the relationship, intact individuals, and the significance of this intactness for the friendship needs to be recognized. Aristotle does not deny the fact or its significance; he just does not have anything to say about it. In dwelling on the oneness of friendship he loses sight of its manyness.[202]

Perhaps the best way to put this objection is that no matter how close friends become, no matter to what extent there is actually a "single soul", there is and always will be important aspects of each friend that are positively separate from and have nothing to do with the friendship, and that these separate aspects must be respected.

Let us begin with the first question of just how much sameness is required for affective unity, whether it actually requires full and complete sameness in characteristics, traits, qualities, affections. Does my account require that there be no difference at all qualitatively between friends? The answer is 'no', although I think Aristotle would say that complete sameness is the *ideal*. According to the view I have attributed to Aristotle,

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[202] Benson (1995, 64-65).

there exist good-making features of my life that I owe to my friend, and good-making features of my friend's life that he owes to me, and good-making features of each of our lives that we owe to each other, and that therefore there exist good-making features of the friendship and life that we share, features for which we are both responsible. We can say of those features that "they are ours" and not merely "these are mine and those are yours" precisely because of the fact that they have been reciprocally shaped. This bundle of reciprocally shaped features *is* what *we* are, *qua* friends. Aristotle's view is that we desire to love and benefit our friends purely in virtue of these features - that because of these features such desires can be construed as we-desires according to the We-Desire Principle, and that these features justify the existence of the We-Attitude.

This view allows that there can be good-making features of my life that have nothing to do with my friend, and vice versa. Of course, these features probably cannot be very many, and they certainly cannot be of a certain sort. That is, a virtuous person cannot be character-friends with a base person. How much sameness exactly must there be? Any number or percentage I could answer with would be somewhat arbitrary. The account of likeness in *Metaphysics* Delta 6 says that two things are like if they have more affections the same than different, so we should at least say that friends must have mostly the same affections. But then what about those features and parts of friends that remain different and not at all mutually shaped?[203]

One very important fact to keep in mind is that even the differences between friends – even the traits that did not come about from simple or complex shaping – are still susceptible to evaluative shaping. For instance, suppose Chris and Marlo have a

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[203] See Williams (1981, 15-16), who criticizes Aristotle for not valuing difference.

reciprocally shaped affective unity, but that one big difference that exists between them is this: Chris is a philosopher and has always been immersed in the arts, while Marlo is a scientist and has always been immersed in math and science. Each has always been skeptical of the profession of the other, since before they were friends. Chris has thought that science is too rigid and cannot bring itself to ask the truly important and interesting questions about Being, while Marlo has thought that philosophy is too speculative, too averse to empirical study, and unable to answer any question at all. Over the long course of their friendship, as they live their lives together, neither truly comes to assume the values of the other with respect to their professions. Chris never comes to value science as Marlo does, and Marlo never comes to value philosophy as Chris does. However, they do become less hostile than they originally were and they do become more educated about and appreciative of the profession of the other.

But more importantly, as they attempt to mutually shape each other, although they do not succeed completely, what happens as a result is this: Chris, because of Marlo's attempted shaping, has a better understanding of his own valuing of philosophy and why it is important to him and what makes it different from science. Likewise – Marlo, because of Chris' attempted shaping, has a better understanding of his own valuing of science and why it is important to him and what makes it different from philosophy. So now, philosophy gives value to Chris' life in a new kind of way, *in a way that he owes to Marlo.* Likewise, science now gives value to Marlo's life in a new kind of a way, *in a way that he owes to Chris.* So it is possible that even differences become subject to evaluative shaping.

But that possibility may never come to fruition. The differences may remain differences and may never even be subject to evaluative shaping, and there is a worry that Aristotelian friends will not value these differences in the right kind of way. It is true that the account of the single-soul I have given places little evaluative importance on these differences. Insofar as *A* and *B* are friends, those differences are accidental. For *A* and *B* to be friends is for them to have a certain amount of mutually shaped sameness between them, and *A* and *B* value each other primarily because of that sameness. That does not mean that the differences cannot be valued. Even though *A* cannot stand one of *B's* favorite pastimes - the opera, he will accompany *B* to the opera on occasion because it makes *B* happy. He will care that *B's* operatic desires are fulfilled. But this caring flows entirely from the fact of their mutually shaped unity in their other respects.

Aristotle would, therefore, disagree with Nussbaum when she says: "The object of *philia* must be seen as a being with a separate good, not as simply a possession or extension of the *philos*; and the real *philos* will wish the other well for the sake of that separate good" (1986, 355). Aristotle's first response would be to say that the essential activity of friendship – shared living and reciprocal shaping – makes it so that there is no "separate good". But in response to the rejoinder that the remaining differences must be disinterestedly respected as a separate good, Aristotle must bite the bullet and say "false".

This brings us to the second and closely related objection that the proffered account of the single-soul seems to treat friendship as if it encompasses the entirety of a friend's life, when clearly friendship makes up just a part of a friend's life. *Of course*, the thought goes, friends have "separate goods". The idea that they could become *so* much the same that they have so few differences and thereby have no genuine "separate goods"

is erroneous. In response to this objection: Because Aristotle thinks that the *telos* of friendship is shared living, which allows for *sunaisthanesthai,* he very much does think that friendship encompasses, if not the entirety, a very large portion of one's life. Surely this is why in *NE* IX.10 he raises the question of how many friends one can and should have. He doesn't give a number, but comes very close to saying that if there is a number, it might just be one. He compares friendship to romantic love (ἐρᾶν), noting that romantic love is for one person (*NE* IX.10 1171a12-15). Is it absurd to think that friends could ever be this close to one another? Maybe today it is, and maybe in Aristotle's day, there was more time for friends to engage in shared activity. But just because we might find it absurd does not make it absurd. Assuming two friends spent as much time together as required by Aristotle's conception of shared living (συζῆν), I don't find it to be absurd at all that such constant involvement with each other would make for precisely what Aristotle thinks it would make for. Montaigne, as we have seen, certainly did not think it absurd, and he found his friendship with la Boétie to be illustrative of Aristotle's definition of friends as a single soul dwelling in two bodies. Also, it is worth pointing out that scientific studies linking friendship to good health show that it is not uncommon for lifelong companions to die within months of each other, which to me suggests that some friends do achieve something close to the kind of unity I've attempted to explain.[204]

But there is another way to put this objection that makes it stronger. My account claims that friends are essentially what they have made each other to be. I have been careful to say that a friend is, *qua friend,* what he has been made to be by his friend. The

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[204] I learn this from a footnote in Liu (2010), who cites the following: Parker-Pope, T. (2009) "What are friends for? A longer life", The New York Times, April 20. The article cites several recent studies, e.g., Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health (2005, 59, pp. 574–79), New England Journal of Medicine (2007, 357, pp. 370–79).

objection, therefore, would claim that to aim at the good of a friend *qua* friend is not enough, for Aristotle says that we care for our friends *for what they are*, and he contrasts this with the "accidental" valuing of the friendships of pleasure and utility (*NE* VIII.3). My account, the objection goes, must therefore be committed to the claim that "Socrates" and "Socrates the friend of Glaucon" is a by-nature unity and not an accidental unity, but that claim is clearly false for Aristotle. So, on my account, friends do not value each other *qua* human beings. They only value each other *qua* friends.

This objection, though instructive, poses no threat to the solution to the problem of motivation given in this chapter. While it is true that Aristotle thinks that character-friends value each other for what they are, he cashes this out in terms of valuing someone *for his character.* As he says in *NE* VIII.4: "The friendship of good people alike in virtue is complete, since they similarly wish good things to each other <u>*as good*</u> (οὗτοι γὰρ τἀγαθὰ ὁμοίως βούλονται ἀλλήλοις <u>ᾗ ἀγαθοί</u>), and they are good in their own right."[205] He does not think that valuing someone for what he is means valuing him independently of valuing what is good and virtuous about him.[206] And I have argued that it is Aristotle's view that, in a friendship, the features of each friend that make up their respective goodness and virtue are reciprocally shaped and unified. So, the fact that my account claims that friends value each other *qua* friends does not lead it into any inconsistency with Aristotle's text.

As Montaigne wrote of his friendship with la Boétie: "In the friendship I speak of, our souls mingle and blend with each other so completely that they efface the seam that

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[205] 1156b5-6; my emphasis.

[206] In fact, he thinks that if a friend should become terribly vicious, one should dissolve the friendship. See *NE* IX.3.

joined them, and cannot find it again. If you press me to tell why I loved him, I feel that this cannot be expressed, except by answering: Because it was he, because it was I."[207] This quote strikes me as refreshingly Aristotelian. It is that blending and mingling of souls that I have tried to give an account of in this chapter and explain how it makes for a unique solution to the problem of motivation. To consider one last objection: it might be thought that the numerical distinctness of friends has more important implications for Aristotle than my account allows. It might be thought that numerical distinctness makes possible a very robust distinction between the virtuous agent's good and the friend's good, since the virtuous agent's synchronic and diachronic persistence as an enmattered form can generate needs and interests for the virtuous agent that are distinct from the friend's needs and interests as an enmattered form.[208]

I agree that numerical distinctness *makes possible* a robust distinction between the virtuous agent's good and the friend's good. I think that Aristotle recognizes this possibility as well, and that he is aware of the difficulties that numerical distinctness poses for ideal friendship. Thus, he writes in the *Eudemian Ethics* that although a friend is *another* self (ἄλλος αὐτός), still a friend is a *separate* self (αὐτὸς διαιρετὸς) (*EE* VII.12 1145a30-35). But I believe that Aristotle sees this numerical distinctness as something to be *overcome,* in a way. Or rather, if numerical distinctness can make possible a robust distinction between the agent's good and the friend's good, Aristotle's view is that we need to limit that possibility as much as possible. The way to do this is through συζῆν. Thus he writes, immediately after claiming that a friend is a separate self, "Therefore, to perceive a friend must be in a way to perceive one's self and to know

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[207] In Pakaluk (1991, 192).

[208] I thank Matthew Walker for pressing me on this point at the 2010 Eastern APA.

a friend to know one's self" (*EE* VII.12 1245a35); And he claims at *NE* IX.9, as we've seen, that the agent must perceive his own being and his friend's being together as one (συναισθάνεσθαι) and exhorts friends to συζῆν – all efforts to limit the damage that numerical distinctness can do.

I call our attention one more time to the single-soul passage from the *Eudemian Ethics:*

> For the friend wants, if possible, not merely to feel pain along with his friend, but to feel the same pain, e.g. to feel thirsty when he is thirsty, if that could be, as closely as possible. The same words are applicable to joy, which, if felt for no other reason than that the other feels joy, is a sign of friendship. Further, we say about friendship such things that friendship is equality, and true friends a single soul. (*Eudemian Ethics* 1240a36-1240b9)

I interpret this passage to mean the following: Ideally, I want to feel *the same pain* that my friend feels, when he is in pain. Ideally, I'd like to share the same central nervous system as he. Ideally, we would be a single-soul in the extremely literal sense of being a single enmattered form. But we're not. And since we're not, we want to approximate that ideal "as closely as possible". Reciprocal shaping gives us that approximation. It may not make friends into a single enmattered form, but it does make We-Attitudes and We-Desires possible. Incidentally, that friends are a single soul in the reciprocally shaped sense also might explain why Aristotle thought that the dead person's *eudaimonia* could be affected by what happens to his friends who survive him.[209]

4. Conclusion: Self-Sufficiency and Friendship

[209] See *NE* I.11.

In this final section, I consider the merits of Aristotle's attempted resolution of the *aporia* regarding self-sufficiency and friendship, and also how the argument from nature relates to the two other arguments in IX.9 – the arguments from self-awareness and pleasure. The *aporia* is as follows: On the one hand, "they say that the divinely happy and self-sufficient people have no need of friends, since 'good things are theirs'. Since they are self-sufficient, they stand in need of nothing else" (*NE* IX.9 1169b5-7). But on the other hand, "it seems absurd, when attributing every good thing to the happy person, not to assign him friends, which are considered the greatest external goods" (*NE* IX.9 1169b9-11). And besides, since it is in our nature to live together, it would be absurd to make the happy person a solitary individual (*NE* IX.9 1169b17-18).

The source of the *aporia* seems clear: friends are quite obviously valuable, yet since happiness was defined in terms of self-sufficiency and a self-sufficient person has no needs, it seems that the happy person does not need friends. But it is actually unclear what Aristotle takes to be the main question of the *aporia.* He does, of course, unequivocally conclude that we need friends. But is he asking whether it is really the case, as one half of the *aporia* claims, that a human being can be both solitary and happy? If so, then he must be trying to show that the road to happiness is necessarily *though* friendship. Alternatively, he might be asking whether the life of a person who *already has* friends can stay as good or even be better if the person lets those friendships go. Even if the answer to this question is 'no', it is consistent with the claim that a person can be both solitary and happy, at least a person who has never formed a friendship based on character.[210]

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[210] Kosman (2004) thinks that the question Aristotle poses is why we require friends even when we are happy. Cooper (1980, 317-18) and Stern-Gillet (1995, ch. 6) take Aristotle to be asking whether having

The two arguments in IX.9 that precede the argument from nature – the argument from self-awareness and the argument from pleasure – show that it is the first question he has in mind. They show that his primary concern is to disabuse us of the notion that someone can be both solitary and happy. The argument from self-awareness proceeds as follows:

1) Being happy consists of living and being active. (1169b31-32)

2) The activity of a good person is good and pleasant for him. (1169b32-33)

3) The actions of one's friend are both good and one's own. (1169b35-70a1)[211]

4) The actions of one's friend are pleasant to a good person. (from 2 and 3).

5) We are better able to observe our neighbors than ourselves. (1169b33-34)

6) Observing the good actions of a friend is a better way of observing one's own good actions. (from 3 and 5)

7) If he chooses to observe actions that are both good and his own, the good person will need and seek friends. (from 1-6)

Step 5) is a very important step in this argument, for it shows that Aristotle thinks that the solitary person is going to have a difficult time engaging in a certain valuable activity. He thinks that there is something valuable that we get out of observing actions that are both good and οἰκείας. I have interpreted the argument strongly by translating οἰκείας as "one's own" rather than just "familiar", so that the argument makes clear that the agent seeks self-awareness. This, I would argue, is required by step 5) combined with

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friends is a necessary condition for *eudaimonia.* Osborne (2009) is not clear, it seems to me, about which question she takes Aristotle to be asking.

[211] I read lines 1169b31-70a1 as saying that there are two things that are pleasant by nature – what is good, and what is *oikeion.* I read the sentence ἄμφω γὰρ ἔχουσι τὰ τῇ φύσει ἡδέα at 1170a1 to mean that the actions of good people who are friends have both things that are pleasant by nature.

Aristotle's doctrine that a friend is another self. But we don't need to interpret the argument this strongly to get the desired result. For the point is that there is something that the good person must do in order to be happy (namely observe actions that are good and *oikeias*) that he either cannot do, or cannot do properly in a solitary state. Therefore, he needs friends.

In the argument from pleasure, a simpler argument, Aristotle notes that many people think that friends are necessary in order to live pleasantly. He agrees, claiming that "the life of a solitary individual is difficult, since it is not easy to be continuously active on one's own; yet with different persons, and in relation to others, it is easy" (1170a5-8). Just as with the argument from self-awareness, Aristotle here takes the main question of the *aporia* to be whether someone can truly be both solitary and happy. His answer is 'no'. Happiness, he thinks, requires the cultivation of friendship.

But the argument from nature must take the second question – whether a life can stay as good or be better without the friendships one already has – to be the main question of the *aporia.* For, that argument already assumes that a friendship has been formed, and from that it argues that friends bear a certain relation to one another that makes them choiceworthy to each other. It is a single being (*einai*) that is shared in the best kind of friendship; so to lose a friend would be the equivalent of, in a way, losing one's own being. But the argument, on its own, does not show that a solitary person who never formed a friendship cannot attain *eudaimonia.* It does not address the solitary person at all, but addresses the person who already has a friend. Yet Aristotle seems to think that the argument shows that a solitary person cannot be happy. His final statement on the *aporia,* a statement clearly based on the argument from nature, is the following:

"But anything worth choosing for a divinely happy person needs to belong to him, or else in that respect he will be in need. So then, anyone who is to be happy will need friends who are good (δεήσει ἄρα τῷ εὐδαιμονήσοντι φίλων σπουδαίων)" (1170b16-20). More formally:

1) Anything worth choosing for the good person needs to belong to him, or else in that respect he will be in need.

2) A friend is worth choosing.

3) The good person needs friends.

This argument is problematic for a number of reasons.[212] Step 2) needs to specify that a friend is worth choosing for someone who *already has a friend,* because the argument from nature simply does not show that a solitary person who has never formed a friendship ought to form one. Yet Aristotle still concludes that anyone *who is to be happy* (notice the use of the future participle τῷ εὐδαιμονήσοντι) must have excellent friends. But all that strictly follows is that anyone who is to *remain* happy must maintain his excellent friendships.

Now, we could be more charitable to Aristotle and say that he is simply using different arguments to answer different questions. The arguments from self-awareness and pleasure show that we need to form friendships, and the argument from nature shows that we need to maintain friendships. One potential problem for this line of defense is that the arguments from self-awareness and pleasure *also* seem to show that we need to maintain our friendships so that we maintain our happiness. If happiness requires

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[212] For one thing, the first premise seems clearly false. Just because something is worth choosing for me does not mean that I need it – that my self-sufficiency requires it. The first premise seems to commit Aristotle to the following thesis: If there is a reason to X, then I need to X. But just because there is a reason to do something does not mean that I need to do it. Perhaps if there is an *overriding reason* to X, then I need to X, but that is not what the argument says.

observing actions that are both good and one's own (*oikeias*), and friendship provides the best means to this, then it follows that I need to both form and keep a friendship. The argument from nature, then, seems somewhat gratuitous. But it is *not* gratuitous for the very reason that it appeals to the single soul, and in so doing helps solve the problem of motivation as well as the *aporia* regarding self-sufficiency and friendship.

After all, the arguments from self-awareness and pleasure offer nothing but self-regarding reasons for why we need friends. As we saw in Chapter II, some scholars – like Annas and Whiting – try to deny altogether that the virtuous agent acts for these reasons when he seeks friends and benefits them. Others, like Kraut, argue that "to initiate a friendship is to set one's motivation into flux, so that self-interested reasons are eventually supplemented by, and sometimes outweighed by, altruistic reasons" (Kraut 1989, 138). On each of these views, the reason Aristotle appeals to the argument from nature is that it shows that there are other-regarding reasons that make friends choiceworthy. For Annas and Whiting, those reasons are meant to replace the self-regarding reasons of the arguments from self-awareness and pleasure; for Kraut, they are meant to "supplement or outweigh" them. But each of those views relies on an interpretation of the argument from nature that we refuted in section 2.2.1 which itself relies on an interpretation of the relation between self-love and friendship in Aristotle that we refuted in Chapter II. As I have argued, the import of the argument from nature is that in the best kind of friendship I perceive my own existence and my friend's existence together as one. On this view, friendship is neither selfish nor selfless. I value my friend not because I see it as a way of valuing myself, but nor do I value him independently of valuing myself. Rather, Aristotle's view provides for the possibility of we-valuing. It's

not that I value my friend on account of him being me, and it's not that he values me on account of me being him. Rather, *we* value *us,* since we have both been made by each of us.

As it turns out, we can read Aristotle as appealing to the arguments from self-awareness and pleasure for why we need to make friends, and to the argument from nature for why need to keep our friends. That having been said, I don't see how it can be avoided that Aristotle's virtuous agent *seeks* friendship for entirely self-regarding reasons. But I don't see this as a problem. The argument from nature shows that once a friendship is formed, self-regarding reasons become the reasons of an expanded self – of the we-subject.[213] And as Aristotle says, while the desire for friendship comes quickly, friendship itself takes time (*NE* VIII. 1156b32). But at any rate, it is not the case, as Kraut claims, that Aristotle's view is that self-interested reasons are eventually supplemented or outweighed by altruistic reasons in friendship; nor is it the case, as Annas and Whiting claim, that Aristotle's virtuous agent is not motivated by self-love at all. Rather, the self is expanded to include the friend in such a way that issues of egoism and altruism need not arise.

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[213] Stern-Gillet seems to take issue with this. She claims that "since self-awareness cannot occur in the absence of an object of cognition, neither can the specific kind of self-realization brought about by friendship be aimed at from the friendless state. Aristotelian agents therefore simply could not seek virtue friends in order to secure a good they would be unable even to conceive in their absence" (1995, 141); cf. Flakne (2005, 51-59) and Osborne (2009, 351-352; 359-362). Suppose you are an ethically virtuous person with lots of external goods, but that you have no friends. An equally ethically virtuous acquaintance of yours (an *acquaintance,* not a friend) runs into you at the local coffee shop and starts telling you about this great character-friendship he has formed and goes into great detail about the specific kind of self-realization brought about by friendship. Isn't it possible that you would then have some idea of what your acquaintance was talking about and be curious enough to go out and pursue some friends in order to see what that specific kind of self-realization is like?

IV

Virtue and Happiness

> Since happiness is a certain sort of activity of the soul in accord with complete virtue, we must examine virtue; for that will perhaps also be a way to study happiness better. (*NE* I.13 1102a5-7)

1. Introduction

This chapter examines the problem of motivation as it arises in the case of virtue and happiness. As we did with the problem in the case of friendship, we will consider each of the three possible solutions: Unintentional Self-Love, Overdetermination, and the Constitutive Solution. Sections 2-4 will be devoted to each possible solution, and it will be shown that of the three, it is the constitutive solution that ought to be attributed to Aristotle. Section 5 examines how the constitutive solution treats the well-being of other people who are not friends in relation to the virtuous agent.

In the remainder of this introductory section we shall take a closer look at the main passages that give rise to the problem. The place to begin is the function argument of *NE* I.7, which is where we first learn about *eudaimonia's* relation to virtue. The function argument begins with the claim that a being's good, or well-being, or – its *flourishing* – resides in its function, or characteristic activity (ἔργον) (*NE* I.7, 1097b23-30). This activity, being characteristic, is also our end (τέλος). If a human being has a characteristic activity, then his or her flourishing will consist in somehow performing this activity. According to Aristotle, the characteristic activity of a human being is "some sort of life of action of the part of the soul that has reason" (*NE* I.7, 1098a3-4). Reasoning, then, is the human function.

But it cannot be the mere performance of the function that constitutes one's flourishing. It has to be the *good* performance of the function. In other words, the function must be performed *well* (τὸ εὖ) (*NE* I.7, 1098a8-15). So in order for a human being to flourish, he has to engage in good reasoning. He must reason well, which means that he must reason in accordance with virtue (κατ' ἀρετήν). This is how virtue comes into play in relation to happiness. Virtue is the state (ἕξις) that provides for the *wellness* of the performance of the function. Now, Aristotle thinks that the soul has both a rational and non-rational part. In the fully virtuous person, the non-rational part listens to and obeys the rational part (*NE* I.13 1102b14-1103a11). That is, the temperate person not only knows, *via* his rational part, that he ought not drink that fourth beer. In addition, his appetitive desires want no part of that fourth beer. In contrast, the merely continent person knows he shouldn't have that fourth beer, but he has to fight off his appetitive desire to drink it. The virtues of character, for Aristotle, are strictly speaking virtues of the non-rational part of the soul – the part that shares in reason by being able to listen to and obey it (1102b26-30). If a person has the virtue of temperance, then he will not only know how many drinks he ought to consume, but he'll also experience no inclinations that compete with his knowledge of how many he ought to consume. His inclinations will agree with his knowledge. In this way, the virtues of character provide for excellent functioning. The particular virtues of character that Aristotle recognizes are: Courage, Temperance, Generosity, Magnanimity (Pride), Mildness, Friendliness, Truthfulness, and Justice. Since these virtues make for good functioning, they make for *eudaimonia,* and in this way virtue and happiness are linked, for Aristotle.

We can therefore see why Aristotle would think that the virtuous agent has a self-regarding motive to pursue the virtuous life. Since performing virtuous actions nurtures and maintains the excellent condition of one's soul, which is what one's *eudaimonia* partly consists in, one motive the agent has to perform a virtuous action is that performing it is beneficial from the standpoint of his own *eudaimonia.* But of course, we are also told that virtuous actions must be chosen *for themselves* (δι' αὐτά), and that those who do not choose virtuous actions for themselves do not count as virtuous (*NE* II.4 1105a32; VI.12 1144 a13-20). Yet both motives, Aristotle thinks, are at play in the virtuous agent, as is made clear by this pivotal passage:

> τιμὴν δὲ καὶ ἡδονὴν καὶ νοῦν καὶ πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν αἱρούμεθα μὲν καὶ δι' αὐτά (μηθενὸς γὰρ ἀποβαίνοντος ἐλοίμεθ' ἂν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν), αἱρούμεθα δὲ καὶ τῆς εὐδαιμονίας χάριν, διὰ τούτων ὑπολαμβάνοντες εὐδαιμονήσειν.
>
> Honor, pleasure, understanding, and every virtue we certainly choose because of themselves, since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result; but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, supposing that through them we shall be happy (*NE* I.7, 1097b1-5).

Henceforth I will at times refer to this passage as simply "the I.7 passage". How we solve the problem of motivation in the case of virtue and happiness, as we shall see, hinges on how we interpret this passage.

Before we consider the possible solutions, there is one point that ought to be made concerning the eudaimonist axiom, a point that was rehearsed in Chapter I section 3.2. It is common to interpret Aristotle's eudaimonism agent-relatively, according to which the agent's ultimate end is his own *eudaimonia.*[214] But there are some who think that

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[214] E.g. Field (1921, 109), Hardie (1968, 331), Allan (1952, 138), Ross (1923, 208; 231-32), Gottlieb (1996). In addition: Ackrill (1980, 15-33), Engberg-Pedersen (1983, ch.1), and Kraut (1989, chs. 2 & 4). Though as Politis (1998, n31) points out, the latter three commentators construe agent-relative eudaimonism so weakly that it becomes hardly distinguishable from agent-neutral eudaimonism. Kraut

Aristotle's eudaimonism ought to be understood agent-neutrally, according to which the agent's ultimate end is *someone's* eudaimonia.[215] On some occasions, it might be his own, and on others it might be another person's eudaimonia, and on others perhaps even the eudaimonia of the *polis.* It might be thought, and some have thought, that if Aristotle's eudiamonism is understood agent-neutrally, then there really is no problem of motivation in the case of virtue and happiness.[216] But this is *false,* and it is important to see why.

Suppose we understand Aristotle's eudaimonism agent-neutrally, according to which we choose virtue for the sake of happiness in the sense that we always choose it for the sake of *someone's* happiness. Even if this were true, it *would not* follow that the agent never chooses virtue for the sake of *his own* happiness (he counts as "someone" after all). On the agent-neutral interpretation, the I.7 passage is, at least potentially, *more* problematic, for it sets up at least two potential conflicts rather than just the one we have focused on: 1) For those virtuous actions aimed at the eudaimonia of *someone else,* the I.7 passage contrasts choosing those actions for themselves with choosing them for the sake of someone else's *eudaimonia.* 2) For those virtuous actions aimed at our own *eudaimonia*, the I.7 passage contrasts choosing those actions for themselves with choosing them for the sake of our own *eudaimonia.* The point is, interpreting Aristotle's eudaimonism agent-neutrally by no means gets rid of 2), and it is 2) that I wish to focus

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(1989) is a good example. He thinks that Aristotle's view is that the agent's ultimate end is his own contemplative activity, but goes to great lengths to argue that Aristotle also thinks that the agent will often sacrifice his own contemplative activity (see pages 309-311 for Kraut's response to an important objection).

[215] E.g. McKerlie (1998), Morrison (2001).

[216] See Whiting (2002, 281).

on. However, whether Aristotle's eudaimonism is agent-neutral or agent-relative will become an important question when we consider to what extent the constitutive solution allows for the agent to have a proper concern for the good of others. This will be discussed in section 5, and the nature of Aristotle's eudaimonism will be addressed in section 5.1.

Let us now take up the various possible solutions to the problem.

2. Unintentional Self-Love

We will once again begin by assuming the standard meaning of choosing X for itself:

1) X is valued and chosen independently of how X contributes to one's own happiness.

2) X is taken as something that, by itself, provides a reason to promote it.

As we saw in the case of friendship, unintentional self-love denies that the agent is motivated by his own *eudaimonia*. For the sake of clarity, here are the main interpretive claims again, slightly amended to account for the fact that we are now considering the case of virtue:

C1) Whenever Aristotle seems to endorse self-regarding motives, he's merely saying that some people tend to be motivated in that way as a matter of psychological fact. He is *not* (they claim) endorsing those motives, and his view is that the virtuous agent chooses virtue for its own sake and for no other reason.

C2) According to Aristotle, one's own *eudaimonia* can only be achieved if one is not consciously aiming at it; it can only be achieved if one chooses virtue for its own sake and for no other reason.[217] And so, for this reason, self-love (according to Aristotle) causes the agent to

[217] Whiting (2002). This is similar to the sophisticated consequentialist position according to which someone will do a better job of maximizing utility if he develops dispositions to not try to maximize utility. See also Homiak (1981, 640 & 650) and Kraut (1989, 137-138).

> eventually develop a disposition to value virtue for its own sake. In this way self-love is said to explain what the agent does without motivating the agent.
>
> C3) Because by being virtuous the agent does attain something good for himself, he can be said to act for the sake of his own happiness from an outside perspective. It is only in this third-person-perspective sense that he acts for the sake of his own happiness.[218]

We may begin by immediately ruling out C1) as a possible interpretation of the I.7 passage. On C1), we would have to read Aristotle in that passage as saying that people, as a matter of psychological fact, tend choose virtue for the sake of happiness, but the virtuous agent ought only choose virtue for its own sake. That is simply wrong.[219] Aristotle says plainly that we choose virtue both for itself and for the sake of our own happiness.[220]

As for C2), we may reject it for the same reasons we rejected it in Chapter II in the case of friendship, but also for two additional important reasons that deserve to be recognized. If Aristotle thinks that the agent's own *eudaimonia* does not provide him with a motive, what are we to make of his claim in the I.7 passage that we choose virtue for the sake of happiness (τῆς εὐδαιμονίας χάριν)? Whiting, the main proponent of C2), recognizes the difficulty here, and claims that her account requires her "to read this

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[218] Annas (1988) and Whiting (2002 and 2006).

[219] And in truth, I do not know of anyone who argues for this claim in the case of virtue and happiness. Annas and Whiting, we have seen, argue for it in the case of friendship.

[220] Some have argued that what Aristotle means by saying that we choose virtue both for itself and for the sake of happiness is that on some occasions we choose virtue because it contributes to our happiness, and on other occasions we choose virtue for its own sake. The motives are independent of each other, and the virtuous move back and forth from acting on the one to acting on the other. E.g. Kenny (1965-6, 28). Gottlieb (2009, 138) wrongly attributes this view to Kraut (1989). She does not cite any page numbers. It is clearly not Kraut's view. His view, as will be discussed, is that "an act can be done for two independent reasons: to benefit others and to benefit oneself." As noted in Chapter II, this interpretation concedes to someone like Annas or Whiting the incoherence of something being chosen simultaneously for its own sake and for the sake of something else. The I.7 passage suggests that, and beckons us to see how, it is *not* incoherent to simultaneously choose X both for itself *and* for the sake of Y.

passage as saying that we choose virtue for the sake of *eudaimonia* simply in the sense that we *recognize* that virtue will contribute to *eudaimonia* (which is how I must take *dia toutôn hupolambonontes eudaimonêsein*) even though this is not our ultimate reason for choosing it" (2002, 286 n26). But the passage cannot be taken in this way, for Aristotle says, after all, that we *choose* it (αἱρούμεθα) for the sake of *eudaimonia.* And furthermore, given that it is the main aim of the *Ethics* to show us how to hit the target – how to achieve the ultimate goal – it is *extremely* unlikely that Aristotle thought that the only way to hit that goal was to not aim at it. If Aristotle actually thought this, it's something he ought to have mentioned to his audience, since he is trying to teach them how to become good and hit the target. But he *never* mentions it. He never even hints at it. The only evidence Whiting provides that Aristotle might think this is the simple fact that he claims that virtue must be chosen for its own sake, which strikes me as a question-begging move.

C3) need not be entertained since there are no good reasons to think that it is Aristotle's view that the virtuous agent does not aim at his own *eudaimonia* when performing virtuous actions. We cannot just take the fact that there are conceptual and moral difficulties that arise from Aristotle's endorsement of both motives to entail that he must not have really endorsed one of those motives. We should abandon unintentional self-love, then, as a way of getting Aristotle out of the problem of motivation in the case of virtue.

3. Overdetermination

According to the overdetermination solution, virtuous actions have two *independent* sources of value. One of those sources of value is the agent's own *eudaimonia.* The other source of value is the action itself.[221] And so, virtuous actions have value on this view a) because they in some way contribute to the agent's *eudaimonia,* and b) simply in virtue of being virtuous actions. Each of those sources of value generates the two motives we have been dealing with, and those motives are independent of each other in virtue of being generated from two independent sources of value. To choose the action for its own sake is to choose it just because it is a virtuous action, while to choose the action for the sake of *eudaimonia* is to choose it because it in some way contributes to *eudaimonia.* Just as in the case of friendship, the strategy then relies on counterfactuals in order to solve the conceptual and moral difficulties.

Much of the work that was done in Chapters I and II may be utilized here. We may conclude for the same reasons that we did in Chapter II that, regarding how one may lack a motive, the counterfactuals must be understood in terms of the circumstantial lack and not the desiderative lack. For on the desiderative lack interpretation, we would in effect be asking what the agent would do if he was a different kind of agent than the one expressly described by Aristotle. This is unhelpful. What we want to know is what the virtuous agent – the one described by Aristotle - would do if his circumstances changed in a way that prevented him from having one of those motives.

And because the I.7 passage, the only textual evidence for the overdetermination solution in the case of virtue and happiness, so clearly countenances only one of the counterfactual scenarios (S1), we may focus solely on that one. Aristotle says that we

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[221] This view is found in Kraut (1989, 137-138) and Gottlieb (2009, 138-141).

choose the virtues for themselves, "*since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result* (μηθενὸς γὰρ ἀποβαίνοντος ἑλοίμεθ' ἂν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν)". It is quite easy to understand this claim to mean that we would choose virtue even if we knew that our own *eudaimonia* would not be promoted by so choosing. Recently, Paula Gottlieb has recommended that we take this claim at "face value" in order to understand how virtue is chosen both for its own sake and for the sake of happiness. As she puts it:

> Aristotle himself explains that we choose virtue, honor, and the rest for their own sake because we would still choose them even if they had no further result, but we also choose them for the sake of happiness because we believe that through them we shall be happy. An analogy may be helpful. Just as an athlete chooses to run a race just to participate but also in the hope of winning first prize, but would still choose to run even if there were no prizes, so the good person will desire virtue both for its own sake and for the sake of the happiness it will bring, even if it turns out, by some misfortune, not to bring happiness. She will not want happiness by any other means. Both running a race and virtue have something to be said for them in their own right, but that does not mean that at the same time they cannot be chosen for other reasons too.[222]

Whether we should attribute this view to Aristotle depends on two closely related matters: 1) Does Aristotle think that there could be circumstances in which the agent is effectively prevented from having the motive to choose virtue for the sake of his own *eudaimonia?* That is, does Aristotle think that there could be circumstances in which virtue provides no eudaimonic benefits? 2) Are there alternative and better ways of understanding the claim in the I.7 passage that Gottlieb says we should take at "face value"? I will now argue that the answer to the questions posed in 1) is 'no', and in 2) 'yes'.

The main problem for the overdetermination solution is this: Aristotle defines happiness as virtuous activity in the function argument. *Eudaimonia* consists in the

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[222] Gottlieb (2009, 140). Cf. Whiting (2002, 286 n27): "...we would choose virtue even if nothing (including *eudaimonia*) resulted from it..."

actualization of our capacities for virtue, and because of this, whenever we actualize those capacities there cannot help but be eudaimonic benefits.[223] So, to ask what the agent would do if choosing a virtuous action were *not* a way of achieving his own *eudaimonia* would be to ask a nonsensical question, for it would basically be to ask what the agent would do if choosing a virtuous action were not a way of actualizing his capacity for virtue. But the eudaimonic benefit provided by a virtuous action is internal to the action itself. *Eudaimonia* consists not in some further result of the actualization of the agent's essential capacities, but in that actualization itself. For this reason, it is a mistake to read the I.7 passage in the way that Gottlieb recommends. When Aristotle says that we would choose virtue even if it had no further result, we should *not* understand *eudaimonia* to be one of the things included in those results, for *eudaimonia* is not characterized in terms of results - not the kind of consequence connoted by the verb ἀποβαίνειν. Rather, Aristotle's claim that we would choose virtue even if it had no further result should be understood much in the same way that we understood his claim that true friends value each other even when there is no utility or pleasure that results from it. As we saw in the case of friendship, Aristotle distinguished character friendship from the friendships of pleasure and utility by the fact that character friends do not value

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[223] See Whiting (2002, 286), who recognizes this fact with some dismay since she wants Aristotle's agent to not have any self-regarding motives at all. She considers the possibility that the agent's motivation is overdetermined – that we can say that the agent chooses virtue both for itself and for the sake of his own eudaimonia, but that the motive to choose virtue for itself would suffice on its own. But she concludes that because of what happiness is for Aristotle, the appropriate counterfactuals could not be spelled out: "For to the extent that the virtuous agent's beliefs about her eudaimonia track her beliefs about what is worth choosing for itself, one cannot easily resolve the question by asking whether she would continue to regard choosing virtuous actions for themselves as worthwhile if she did not regard doing so as a component of her eudaimonia. For part of what it *is* for her to think this worthwhile in the relevant sense is for her to regard it as a component of her eudaimonia. So while she can certainly *recognize* that having and actualizing the capacity for virtue is a component of her eudaimonia, it seems unlikely that this recognition can play any role in her deliberative or motivational economy" (2002, 286).

each other for primarily instrumental reasons. But, this did not mean that character friends do not value each other for eudaimonic reasons.

We should understand the I.7 passage similarly. There are certain things – things like money and reputation – that virtue tends to instrumentally promote. We do value virtue partly for these things, but we value it for itself more because even if money or reputation could not be promoted by choosing virtue, we would choose virtue anyway. But there *is* an eudaimonic benefit in choosing virtue under those circumstances since *eudaimonia* primarily consists in virtuous activity, and we make the decision on that eudaimonic basis. It is important to see that it is not just by coincidence that the circumstances can never prevent the agent from having an eudaimonic motive, for Aristotle. It would be a rather amazing coincidence if virtue always happened to instrumentally further our interests; but Aristotle does not think that virtue only contributes *instrumentally* to *eudaimonia.* What he does think is that virtue provides eudaimonic benefits that are internal and intrinsic to what virtue *is.* This strongly suggests that he *does not* think that the value virtue has in itself is independent of its eudaimonic value, which indicates that he does not accept the standard meaning of valuing virtue for itself. And so we are strongly pushed in the direction of the constitutive solution.

Before taking up the constitutive solution, it is worth mentioning that the overdetermination solution is much easier to square with Aristotle's text for those who think that Aristotle identifies *eudaimonia* exclusively with theoretical contemplation.[224] When Aristotle says that moral virtue is chosen for the sake of happiness, these scholars

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[224] See Chapter I sec. 3.3.

read him to mean that moral virtue can instrumentally promote contemplation.[225] Indeed, this is what Aristotle must mean if he really does identify *eudaimonia* exclusively with contemplation, for moral virtue surely is not a component of contemplation itself. It is easier to fit S1 into this interpretation of Aristotle, for surely there are circumstances in which moral virtue does not instrumentally lead to contemplation. Surely there can be circumstances in which the virtuous agent's choice of moral virtue ends up taking away from the contemplative activity in which he could have engaged. In these circumstances, the agent is prevented from having the motive to choose virtue for the sake of his own *eudaimonia* (contemplation), and the motive to choose virtue for its own sake suffices for the action.[226]

4. The Constitutive Solution

According to the constitutive solution, virtue is chosen both for itself and for the sake of *eudaimonia* insofar as virtue is chosen as an essential constituent part of *eudaimonia*.[227] Central to this solution is the distinction between a constituent and an instrumental means, and the difference between aiming at something as a constituent part

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[225] See Kraut (1989, ch. 3).

[226] This is precisely what Kraut thinks happens. Because Kraut thinks that all eudaimonic value is contemplative value, he thinks that things like moral virtue and friendship can have *non*-eudaimonic value – value that is independent of the agent's own contemplation. See Kraut (1989, chs. 2-3; 5.14). Cf. Van Cleemput (2006, 156). See Lear (2004, ch. 4 & ch.8 sec.5) for an opposing and minority point of view. She argues that morally virtuous actions are chosen for the sake of contemplation because they approximate contemplative activity, not because they are instrumental to it. Her view actually has strong similarities to Tuozzo (1995), who argues that contemplation constitutes "an indirect standard for virtuous action" (1995, 131), and that morally virtuous actions promote contemplation by promoting "the internal, psychic conditions of theoretical contemplation" (1995, 144).

[227] See Bostock (2000, 14), Cooper (1987), Crisp (1994), Devereaux (1981), Keyt (1983 and 1989), Roche (1988), White (1990), Whiting (1986), Ackrill (1980, 29-30), Irwin (1999, 182), Wilkes (1978, 356 n.5). All of these authors think that virtue is a component of *eudaimonia* and not an instrumental means to it.

of some whole and aiming at it as an instrumental means to some further end. We defined this distinction in Chapter II section 4.1. So, someone who aims at virtue as a constituent part of his happiness and not just insofar as virtue has instrumental benefits can thereby be said to aim at virtue for itself.

But this is not yet enough to get us what we want. Consider the following questions posed by Gottlieb as she criticizes the constitutive solution:

> Are there parts that are choiceworthy solely because of their contribution to some whole, and if so, what sense does it make to say that these are choiceworthy also for their own sake? Why are they not merely instrumentally valuable? By analogy, a blade is a part of a lawn-mower, but it does not follow that the blade is choiceworthy apart from its contribution to the lawn-mower, and if it is not so choiceworthy, what makes it choiceworthy for its own sake?[228]

The worry here seems to be that choosing something *for itself* means to choose it not only irrespectively of its instrumental benefits, but also irrespectively of its constitutive contribution to the whole of which it may be a part. This worry has to be overcome in order for the constitutive solution to truly work, because in order for constitutive solution to truly work, it has to show that the agent can and ought to have *both* the thought that he is choosing the virtuous action for itself *and* the thought that he is choosing it for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.* Otherwise, C3) of unintentional self-love would be a viable way of understanding Aristotle on the constitutive solution. C3) stated that: "Because by acting virtuously the agent does attain something good for himself, he can be said to act for the sake of his own happiness from an outside perspective. It is only in this third-person-perspective sense that he acts for the sake of his own happiness." Because of the constitutive part-whole relation between virtue and *eudaimonia,* it will always be true

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[228] Gottlieb (2009, 139-140).

that the agent benefits himself eudaimonically when he acts virtuously. But we do not want to say that he acts for the sake of his own *eudaimonia* merely in virtue of that fact.[229] So, in short, the constitutive solution must explain why choosing virtue for itself *must not* countenance choosing it irrespectively of its constitutive contribution to *eudaimonia.*

In order to do this, the constitutive solution must assume that to choose X for itself is to choose it for those features of it that make it what it is – to choose it for what it essentially is. In Aristotle's technical vocabulary, to choose virtue for itself is to choose it for what it is καθ' αὐτό ("in virtue of itself"). The first sense of καθ' αὐτό which Aristotle identifies in *Metaphysics* Delta is:

> ἓν μὲν γὰρ καθ' αὑτὸ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι ἑκάστῳ, οἷον ὁ Καλλίας καθ' αὑτὸν Καλλίας καὶ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι Καλλίᾳ.
>
> The what-it-is-to-be of each thing, e.g. Callias is in virtue of himself Callias and what-it-is-to-be Callias. (*Met.* Δ.18 1022a25-27)[230]

τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι is also commonly rendered "essence". Worthy of note is that there are two ways of understanding the force of καὶ in the above text. Kirwan (1993, 168) notes that it may mean "and anything else that answers the question 'what is it to be Callias'?" Otherwise, καὶ is being used epexegetically and has the force of 'i.e.'. The first option should be preferred, since the 'i.e.' use of καὶ is uninformative and redundant. We may ask, then, 'what is it to be virtue?' and truly answer that to be virtue is to be that which provides for the excellent functioning of one's soul. In this way, the hand analogy that we examined in Chapter II will be able to carry over nearly perfectly into the case of

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[229] This is, of course, precisely what the proponents of unintentional self-love want to be true.

[230] Kirwan (1993, 168) notes that Aristotle's example is strange here since a more informative example would be "Callias is in virtue of himself a man".

virtue and happiness. There is good reason to think that Aristotle makes essentialist assumptions with his claim that we choose virtuous actions for themselves (δι' αὑτά). Consider that he claims that true friends value each other for themselves - δι' αὑτοῦς – and that he clearly makes an essentialist assumption in his discussion of the difference between character-friendships and pleasure & utility friendships:

> Hence, those who love on account of usefulness, love on account of what is good for themselves; and those who love on account of pleasure, love on account of what is pleasant to themselves – and not in so far as the beloved is [what he is] (οὐχ ᾗ ὁ φιλούμενός ἐστιν), but rather in so far as he is useful or pleasant (*NE* VIII.3 1156a10-16).

In a friendship of pleasure or utility, a friend is not loved for "what he is", but for something else. This is why Aristotle calls these friendships "accidental": "Hence, these friendships are so by accident (κατὰ συμβεβηκός), because it is not as being the man that he is that the beloved is loved, but rather in so far as he provides something" (*NE* VIII.3 1156a16-18).

We should understand Aristotle's claim that we value virtue for itself in the same way that he claims we value our friends for themselves.[231] Valuing virtue for itself

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[231] I follow Kraut (1976, 236-238) and Whiting (2002, 274-276) in making this claim (Whiting herself followed Kraut – see 2002, n8). Much of what I will argue in the remainder of this section is found in Kraut (1976), I have discovered, who argues that for Aristotle, "virtuous acts must be chosen for what they are in themselves, that is, for their inherent properties, one of which is their being principal components of happiness" (239). Kraut, however, does not explore (not in the 1976 paper anyway) the moral implications of his interpretation for Aristotle's virtuous agent. Also, Kraut must have changed his view by the time he wrote *Aristotle on the Human Good* (1989), in which he argues that happiness = contemplation, and that virtuous actions have value and are chosen independently of their contribution to contemplation. It is instructive to compare Whiting (2002) and Kraut (1976) on the issue of the virtuous agent's motivational economy. They both model choosing a virtuous action for itself on Aristotle's account of loving a virtuous person for himself. They both think that to choose a virtuous action for itself is to choose it for those features of it that make it what it is. Kraut thinks that one of the essential features of a virtuous action is that it is a principal component of a happy life, and so grants that the virtuous agent has a self-regarding motive when acting virtuously. Whiting is unclear about whether she thinks that being a principal component in a happy life is an essential feature of a virtuous action (though much of what she says implies it), and wants Aristotle's virtuous agent to not think at all about his own happiness when acting virtuously. See Whiting (2002, n8): "His [Kraut's] account stresses – in a way that I would want to resist – the priority of choosing a virtuous action for the sake of eudaimonia over choosing it for itself." But it is not clear that

means valuing it independently of those *accidental* features of it – like the fact that it tends to bring one a good reputation, or money, or whatever else it happens to be instrumentally useful for.[232] Valuing and choosing virtue for itself means valuing and choosing it for those features of it that make it what it is. Valuing and choosing virtuous *actions* for themselves, then, means valuing and choosing them for those features that make them virtuous actions. Textual evidence that Aristotle holds this view about what it means to choose virtuous actions for themselves is found in his discussions of acting for the sake of the noble (τὸ καλόν) in connection with both generosity and courage. We discussed the noble in Chapter I section 3.4, and the points raised there are relevant here. Aristotle's remark that the virtuous act for the sake of the noble is puzzling since he never gives a substantive account of the noble as he does for his many other key concepts. The remark is scattered throughout the *Ethics*.[233] What is clear from the passages in which he does discuss the noble is that choosing a virtuous action for the sake of the noble is just to choose it insofar is it is a virtuous action. Aristotle treats choosing virtuous actions δι' αὑτοῦς and choosing them τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα as basically the same.

Consider the fact that Aristotle claims that if virtuous actions are not chosen for themselves, then the person choosing them is not truly virtuous (*NE* II.4 1105a32). He makes the same exact claim about the noble:

Kraut's account stresses such a "priority". He does not think that choosing a virtuous action for itself is subordinate to choosing it for the sake of *eudaimonia,* but rather that it is *the same as* choosing it for the sake of *eudaimonia.*

[232] See Kraut (1976, 238). The superficial attractions of virtue are "the honors that are often bestowed upon the virtuous, the avoidance of disgrace and punishment, and all of the other external goods (favors, wealth) that a person might receive because others consider him virtuous."

[233] *NE* 1115b12, 1116b3, 1117b9, 1117b17, 1119b15, 11120a23, 1122b6-7.

> If someone gives to the wrong people, or does not aim at the noble but gives for some other reason (ἀλλὰ διά τιν' ἄλλην αἰτίαν), he will not be called generous, but some other sort of person. (*NE* IV.1 1120a28-29)

In addition, the doctrine of the mean in II.6 states that virtue of character lies in a mean between a vice of excess and a vice of deficiency. To be in the mean state is to be disposed to have certain feelings "at the right times, about the right things, towards the right people, for the right end, and in the right way," for this "is the intermediate and best condition, and this is proper to virtue" (*NE* II.4 1106b21-25). Now consider the following passage:

> Actions in accord with virtue are noble and aim at the noble. Hence the generous person will also aim at the noble in his giving, and will give correctly; *for he will give to the right people, the right amounts, at the right time, and all the other things that are implied by correct giving.* (*NE* IV.1 1120a24-27, my emphasis)

Aristotle implies in this passage that by giving to the right people, the right amounts, at the right time, etc., the virtuous person *thereby* aims at the noble in his giving. But the features of giving at the right time, to the right people, in the right amounts, are just the very features that make the action a virtuous action. Virtue and nobility, then, are fundamentally integrated with respect to moral motivation.[234] An action's status as virtuous is inextricably tied to its status as noble, and vice versa. This is because the features that make an action virtuous *are the same features* that make an action noble. That being the case, the motive from nobility and the motive to choose the virtuous action for itself are the same, in Aristotle's view.

But then why introduce the concept of the noble? I suggest that Aristotle does this in order to call our attention to the beauty of virtuous actions. Aristotle discusses the

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[234] Rogers (1994a, 311) makes this point.

kalon in *Metaphysics* XIII.3 and says that it denotes order (τάξις), symmetry (συμμετρία), and boundedness (τὸ ὡρισμένον) (1078a36-b1). While it may seem odd at first, the formal properties of order, symmetry, and boundedness lie at the heart of Aristotle's understanding of virtue. The mean, bounded by the extremes, ensures symmetry and boundness. And virtuous actions display order by being for the sake of the human good – *eudaimonia* orders them.[235]

If Aristotle thinks that valuing and choosing virtuous *actions* for themselves means valuing and choosing them for those features that make them virtuous actions, then the hand analogy from Chapter II carries over quite well. To refresh our memory, that analogy went as follows: On Aristotle's view, a hand would not be a hand if detached from a body. Since being a part of a body is one of the features that makes a hand a hand (it is an essential feature), to care for one's hand for itself – *for what it is* – is to care for it insofar as it is a part of a body. So to consciously aim at the good of one's hand is, *ipso facto,* to *consciously* aim at the good of one's body (not merely from a third person perspective). A person could care for his hand under some other guise, I suppose. Someone with a strange sort of hand-fetish could care for his hand *qua* beautiful aesthetic appendage. But in Aristotle's language, such a person would not be caring for his hand *insofar as it is a hand.* Such a person would therefore not be caring for his hand for itself – for what it is.

Analogously, one of the features of moral virtue that makes it moral virtue is that it makes for a good functioning human being, and good functioning is *eudaimonia* (*NE* I.7 1098a3-15). In this way, virtue is an essential constituent part of *eudaimonia.* And

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[235] See Lear (2006, 120-122). Allan (1971), Owens (1981), Rogers (1993), and Cooper (1999) have also drawn on these formal properties in order to make sense of the noble.

therefore, at least one essential feature of a virtuous action is that it actualizes the agent's capacity for moral virtue and so helps improve or maintain the excellent condition of his soul. Once again, this kind of actualization and soul-condition is precisely what *eudaimonia* is, according to Aristotle. So, in order to choose a virtuous action for itself – for what it is – the agent must choose it at least partly because the action is constitutive of his own *eudaimonia* – because the action is the actualization of his capacity for moral virtue. In this way, virtuous actions are chosen for themselves precisely insofar as they are chosen for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia.* Someone who chooses a virtuous action entirely independently of its relation to *eudaimonia* actually *does not* choose the action for itself, it turns out.[236]

5. The Constitutive Solution and the Good of Others

The constitutive solution clearly resolves the conceptual difficulty generated by the problem of motivation. X is chosen both for its own sake and for the sake of Y because "X for itself" and "X for the sake of Y" are not two independent reasons for action, but rather converge into a single reason, on the constitutive solution. What remains to be seen regarding the constitutive solution is whether it can adequately resolve the moral difficulty. That difficulty was that self-regarding motives seem to undermine other-regarding motives. For example, take the virtue of generosity (ἐλευθεριότης), and compare the following two agents, David and Jason. Suppose that they both have an

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[236] It may seem as though Aristotle is expecting too much of the agent with respect to knowledge of what makes an action virtuous. If so, that is because of the sophisticated demands of being a *phronimos* – of having *phronêsis.* The *phronimos* acts not just in accord with what makes the action right, but with knowledge of what makes the action right. See *NE* VI.13 1144b26-28: ἔστι γὰρ οὐ μόνον ἡ κατὰ τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον, ἀλλ' ἡ μετὰ τοῦ ὀρθοῦ λόγον ἕξις ἀρετή ἐστιν· ὀρθὸς δὲ λόγος περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἡ φρόνησις ἐστιν.

opportunity to give a healthy sum of money to a local charity that will use the money to better the lives of children in serious need. Suppose both David and Jason see this opportunity and give the money. There are two thoughts each of them might have as they do this:

> T1) "This is the virtuous thing to do."
>
> T2) "This is a chance to actualize my essential human capacities and achieve *eudaimonia*."

Only T1 is motivating David, while Jason is motivated by both T1 and T2. Because of that, David seems to be the morally better agent in this case.

According to the constitutive solution, Aristotle's response will be that someone motivated by T1 *necessarily* is motivated by T2, since to choose a virtuous action for itself is to choose it for its essential features. David, Aristotle will say, is actually the deficient agent and not Jason, since David does not fully understand what it means to choose a virtuous action for itself. But this response really does not do a very good job of answering the moral objection. Jason, after all, seems to have little to no regard for those whom his generous action actually benefits. They do not at all seem to factor into his decision-making. At least, if they do, it is entirely unclear how and in what way they do. And so, Aristotle should not rest his laurels on the above response, for someone who finds the moral objection persuasive may just as well say, "Well, so much for Aristotle's ethics then! It obviously has a serious moral deficiency." But rather than just leave things at this apparent impasse, we should explore the extent to which Aristotle and the constitutive solution to the problem of motivation have the philosophical resources to assuage the concerns of those who think that Aristotle's moral agent is overly self-centered. The constitutive solution certainly does appear to make the agent very self-

centered, for he seems primarily concerned with the actualization of his own capacities. The question is, then, to what extent can the constitutive solution do justice to the good of *others who are not friends?* Can the constitutive solution allow for Aristotle' virtuous agent to have a proper regard for other people? To put it in Kant's language, can Aristotle's agent – on the constitutive solution - regard and treat other people as ends and not merely as means?

5.1. Agent-Neutral Eudaimonism?

Now is the perfect time to return to the question of whether Aristotle's eudaimonism should be interpreted agent-relatively or agent-neutrally, for if the agent-neutral interpretation is correct, then the moral worries just discussed *may* be nothing to worry about. Let's assume for a moment that the agent-neutral interpretation is the correct one. On this interpretation, when Aristotle says that *eudaimonia* is the ultimate end of action, he means that *someone's eudaimonia* is the ultimate end of action. This obviously provides for the possibility that it is Aristotle's view that the ultimate goal of at least some of our actions is the *eudaimonia* of another person, and if this is in fact his view, then it seems that the good of other people certainly figures into his ethics in an acceptable way.

As pointed out earlier in this chapter, interpreting Aristotle's eudaimonism agent-neutrally certainly does not preclude Aristotle from holding that some, even many of our actions are aimed at our own *eudaimonia.* If Aristotle's eudaimonism is agent-neutral, then when he says in the I.7 passage that we choose virtue both for itself and for the sake of *eudaimonia,* he would in effect be distinguishing between two classes of actions:

1) Virtuous actions aimed at one's own *eudaimonia*. These can be chosen both for themselves and for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia*.

2) Virtuous actions aimed at the *eudaimonia* of someone else. These can be chosen both for themselves and for the sake of someone else's *eudaimonia*.

I have demonstrated that the constitutive solution shows how the actions in 1) can be chosen both for themselves and for the sake of *eudaimonia*. Now, even if Aristotle's eudaimonism is agent-neutral, there is *still* the problem of how to explain the contrast in 2) between choosing virtuous actions for themselves and choosing them for the sake of someone else's *eudaimonia*. But for now let's just assume that that problem can be solved. If Aristotle recognizes virtuous actions of the kind in 2), then he thinks that there are some virtuous actions that aim not at the *eudaimonia* of the agent performing them, but at the *eudaimonia* of the person on the receiving end of the action.

Does he recognize such actions? One reason for thinking that he does is that, of the virtues of character that he recognizes, some of them seem to be straightforwardly other-regarding. Generosity and justice, for example, seem straightforwardly to aim at the good of other people. Generous actions aim at giving money to others, while justice – Aristotle says – is "complete virtue in relation to another person (πρὸς ἕτερον)" (*NE* V.1 1129b27). At the same time, there are some virtues that seem to be straightforwardly self-regarding, like temperance and magnanimity. Temperate actions aim at one's own physical health and well-being, while the magnanimous person – Aristotle's "great-souled man" – is so called because of the rightful pride he takes in his own virtue. But all this just shows that Aristotle truly does recognize the distinction between 1) and 2) above, and if he truly does recognize that distinction, then it would seem that he could

answer the moral objection to the constitutive solution. We would still need to explain how the actions in 2) can be chosen *both* for themselves *and* for the sake of someone else's *eudaimonia,* but for now we are assuming that an adequate explanation is available.

At this point, we could take a closer look at the passages in Book I in which Aristotle discusses *eudaimonia* as the highest good and ultimate end of action, and determine if the agent-neutral reading is truly tenable. In truth, I believe that those passages are far more naturally read as specifying the agent's own *eudaimonia* as the end in question. Furthermore, Aristotle's definition of *eudaimonia* presents problems for the agent-neutral interpretation. Happiness is primarily one's own virtuous activity – one's own excellent functioning. Strictly speaking then, we really can only make ourselves *eudaimôn.* *A* cannot actualize *B's* excellent functioning for him. *A* can *promote B's* excellent functioning; he can provide for *B* in ways that make it easier for *B* to function excellently. But strictly speaking, *B's* excellent functioning is not something *A* can achieve solely by his own efforts, and the highest good Aristotle says is the good "achievable in action" (*NE* I.4 1095a17). But in fact, we need *not* take a closer look at those Book I passages to determine whether the agent-neutral interpretation in tenable.

Whether Aristotle's eudaimonism is agent-relative or agent-neutral is something of a red herring in the current context. This may be much to our surprise given the distinction between 1) and 2) above, but it is due to a simple fact. That fact is: regardless of whether Aristotle's eudaimonism is agent-relative or agent-neutral, it remains the case that virtuous actions have built-in eudaimonic benefits to the agent who performs them, and so always provide the agent with a self-regarding motive to perform them. Any

virtuous action – even a generous or just action – actualizes the agent's essential human capacities, which is that in which his *eudaimonia* primarily consists. Now, perhaps, you might say, Aristotle thinks that we sometimes *should not* aim at the actualization of our own capacities.[237] That is, perhaps he thinks that for certain virtuous actions, our reason for choosing them *should not* be that they actualize our capacities for virtue and thereby maintain or improve the excellent condition of our souls. Maybe he thinks that for the seemingly other-regarding virtues, we must forget about the fact that we are actualizing our capacities by performing the actions entailed by those virtues, but for the seemingly self-regarding virtues it is permissible to choose them for the sake of our own actualization.

But Aristotle cannot think that – not if to choose a virtuous action for itself is to choose it for those features of it that make it virtuous. And it is an essential feature of *any* virtuous action that it actualizes the agent's capacity for virtue. This, in essence, is the main problem, for this sense of "choosing a virtuous action for itself" applies in both 1) and 2) above. Choosing a virtuous action for what it is entails choosing it for its eudaimonic benefits. This is why I said that the issue over Aristotle's eudaimonism being agent-relative or agent-neutral is something of a red herring, for even if he does think that we sometimes aim at the good of others, he does not think that we do this irrespectively of our own *eudaimonia* insofar as he holds that every virtuous action provides a reason to choose it because of its built-in eudaimonic benefits to the agent who performs it.

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[237] This is Whiting's view (2002, 283).

Where does this leave us now? We seem to be left with the same morally unattractive picture of Aristotle's virtuous agent as someone who chooses to benefit others by performing a generous action ultimately *for the sake of* the actualization of his own capacities for virtue. It *appears* as though the agent wants to benefit others, but only insofar as benefiting others is a way of achieving his own *eudaimonia.* But I shall argue in the next section that the constitutive solution need not have this implication. To clarify what I shall show: It *will* remain the case that, according to Aristotle, the agent must be motivated by T2 whatever else. Because of this, the sort of Kantian objector I have in mind may not be entirely satisfied. However, just because the agent must be motivated by his own *eudaimonia* does not mean he must view benefiting others as a means to his own *eudaimonia.* The constitutive solution can countenance this. What we end up with is something that looks, on the surface, like overdetermination, but is subtly and interestingly different.

5.2. Other-Regarding Features of Other-Regarding Virtuous Actions

I have argued that to choose a virtuous action for itself, according to Aristotle, is to choose it for those features of it that make it the kind of action that it is. It is this conception of choosing a virtuous action for itself that will show why we need not accept the foregoing morally unattractive picture of the virtuous agent. The reason we need not accept it is, surprisingly, quite simple: there are other features of a virtuous action that make it the kind of action that it is other than that it is an actualization of the agent's capacity for virtue. In fact, there are essential features of certain virtuous actions that refer plainly to the well-being of other people. To choose a virtuous action for itself is to

choose it for these features too. As simple of a point as this is, it obviously needs some explaining.

Consider justice, and just actions. I focus on justice because I think it provides a paradigm case of a virtue that aims in part at benefiting other people. The analysis I give of justice here I think can be applied to other Aristotelian virtues of character like generosity and courage that seem to have a strong other-regarding component. Justice, Aristotle says, is "related to another and does what benefits another (πρός ἕτερόν ἐστιν· ἄλλῳ γὰρ τὰ συμφέροντα πράττει)" (*NE* VI.1 1130a5-6).[238] Just actions aim at the proper distribution of benefits and harms by which the stability of the *polis* is maintained (*NE* VI.5 1132b31-33). The just person, through his just actions, aims at each person's (including himself) getting his fair share of beneficial and harmful things. "He does not award too much of what is choiceworthy to himself and too little to his neighbor (and the reverse with what is harmful), but awards what is proportionately equal; and he does the same in distributing between others" (*NE* VI. 5 1134a4-7). Conversely: "In an unjust action (τοῦ δὲ ἀδικήματος) getting too little good is suffering injustice, and getting too much is doing injustice" (*NE* VI.5 1134a13-14). So, part of what makes some particular just action a just action is that the intended recipients of the action become properly benefited (or harmed, as it were). And conversely, what makes an unjust action an unjust action is that someone is not being properly benefited (or harmed).

So, take some just action Q, which aims at properly distributing benefits among persons A, B, and C. Here are two essential features of this action:

F1: The action actualizes the agent's capacity for virtue.

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[238] Because justice is complete virtue in relation to another, Aristotle says that it is supreme among the virtues (1129b27).

> F2: Benefits are properly distributed by the agent among persons A, B, and C.

F1 is a feature that Q has (and any virtuous action has) *qua* virtuous action. F2 is a feature that Q has *qua just* virtuous action. To choose the action *for itself* is to choose it for each of these features. But here is the most central point that I wish make: When the agent about to perform the action considers F1 and F2, his concern with F2 *need not be for the sake of F1.* That is, the agent *need not* think of properly distributing benefits among A, B, and C as merely a means to actualizing his own capacities for virtue. F1 and F2 are two different features of the action that the agent recognizes as being essential to that action. F1 provides the agent with a reason and motive to perform the action insofar as it is a virtuous action; F2 provides the agent with a reason and motive to perform the action insofar as it is a just action. These reasons *are* independent of each other in a way, and in a way they are not. They are independent of each other insofar as F2's being an essential feature of the action does not depend on F1's being an essential feature of the action (and *vice versa*).[239] They are not independent of each other insofar as they come from two features that are essential features of one and the same action.

The reader may at this point be puzzled because it might seem that we have turned the constitutive solution into the overdetermination solution, which claimed that virtuous actions have two independent sources of value. There is, however, a subtle but very important difference between the two solutions, and it is crucial to see what that is. According to the overdetermination solution defended by Kraut (1989) and Gottlieb (2009), the value that virtuous actions have in themselves is independent of the value that virtuous actions have insofar as they contribute to the agent's *eudaimonia.* The motive to

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[239] The virtuous agent will still of course have both.

choose the virtuous action for itself and the motive to choose it for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia* were independent motives on that solution. Which is why, on that solution, we sought for counterfactuals according to which the agent would still choose virtuous actions even if it in no way contributed to his own *eudaimonia.* Because the eudaimonic benefits of virtuous actions are internal and intrinsic to the actions themselves for Aristotle, we sought in vain. We discovered that the overdetermination solution was wrong because Aristotle holds that a virtuous action is chosen for itself precisely insofar as it is chosen as an actualization of the agent's capacity for virtue, and so precisely insofar as it is chosen for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia.* I am not at all changing or backing away from that claim right now.

What I am claiming now is that for *some* virtuous actions, namely the other-regarding ones like just actions, the motive to choose it for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia* and the motive to choose it for the sake of someone else's benefit *are* two independent motives, but that they both have their sources in what virtuous actions essentially are. Because virtuous actions are chosen for themselves by being chosen for the features that are essential to them, *some* of those actions (like just actions and others that are other-regarding) are chosen *both* because of the eudaimonic benefits they provide *and* because of the benefits they provide to other people. And to choose them in that way just is to choose them *for themselves.* This is a logically coherent view, and it is perfectly compatible with the constitutive solution. As previously mentioned, this may not completely satisfy the Kantian-like objector who seeks purely disinterested motivation. But it does importantly show that the constitutive solution need not imply that benefiting others is viewed by the agent merely as a means to actualizing his own capacities.

At this point, someone might ask: "If virtuous actions are chosen for themselves by being chosen for all of these different things, what could it be to *not* choose a virtuous action for itself?" This is a good question. We addressed it earlier to some degree, but we ought to address it again more fully. To help us answer it, let us turn to a quote from Kraut's earlier paper (1976), before he apparently changed his view:

> The superficial attractions are the honors that are often bestowed upon the virtuous, the avoidance of disgrace and punishment, and all of the other external goods (favors, wealth) that a person might receive because others consider him virtuous. A good person will be attracted by these features of the moral life, but he cannot be attracted primarily or solely by them. Rather, he performs virtuous acts *because of the intrinsic and unalterable features of the virtuous life* (emphasis mine).[240]

The italicized portion of Kraut's quote I would slightly amend to "because of what virtuous actions essentially are and because of what the virtuous life essentially is", though I think what he says is roughly the same. The point is – for at least some virtuous actions, some of those intrinsic features are self-regarding, and some are other-regarding. But those superficial attractions, i.e. the honors bestowed upon the just, the good reputations that just and virtuous people acquire by being just and virtuous, the way in which being just prevents one from being punished or disgraced, wealth; to choose virtuous actions for *these* things is precisely *not* to choose them for themselves. These are the things for which we can construct the appropriate counterfactuals. So, a virtuous agent – if he is virtuous – will still perform that just action even if it means, for whatever reasons, others will scorn him; even if it means he will lose money, etc. But he will do this both because of the eudaimonic benefits in so acting, and because those others who deserve to be treated justly will rightly benefit.

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[240] Kraut (1976, 238).

If the analysis of just actions given above is accurate, it is reasonable to think that the same sort of analysis can be given for other virtues that seem to have a strong other-regarding component. I have generosity and courage particularly in mind. Generosity aims at giving money to others, and for any generous action, part of what makes it a generous action is that there is a beneficiary who is given the right amount of money, at the right time, and for the right reasons (*NE* IV.1 1120a8-12; 1120a21-23; 1120b20-24). Courage aims at securing safety for others, and surely part of what makes a courageous action courageous is that it does, in fact, in some way secure safety for others. As for the more self-regarding virtues like temperance and magnanimity, they need not pose any special problem merely because they don't have an other-regarding component. I am not trying to show that Aristotle makes the good of others the most central part of ethics, as a theory like utilitarianism does (he clearly does not do this). I am just trying to show that we are not forced to accept a morally unattractive picture of Aristotle's virtuous agent according to which he only justly and generously and courageously benefits others because he sees it as a means to actualizing his own capacities for virtue.

There is, however, one major objection that might be raised against how I have tried to show that we need not accept that morally unattractive picture. That objection is based on Aristotle's distinction between action (πράξις) and production (ποιήσις). I turn to this objection in the next section.

5.3. The Action Thesis

Consider the following passages from *NE* VI:

Text I: διάνοια δ' αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ, ἀλλ' ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική· αὕτη γὰρ καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἄρχει: ἕνεκα γάρ του ποιεῖ πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν,

> καὶ οὐ τέλος ἁπλῶς (ἀλλὰ πρός τι καὶ τινός) τὸ ποιητόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πρακτόν· ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, ἡ δ' ὄρεξις τούτου.
>
> Intellect itself, however, moves nothing, but only the intellect which is for the sake of something and which is practical; for this also rules over the productive intellect, since every one who produces produces for an end, and that which is produced is not an end in the unqualified sense (but only relative to something and of something) – only that which is done is that; for good action is the end, and the desire aims at this. (*NE* VI.2 1139a5-b4)[241]

> **Text II:** τῆς μὲν γὰρ ποιήσεως ἕτερον τὸ τέλος, τῆς δὲ πράξεως οὐκ ἂν εἴη· ἔστι γὰρ αὐτὴ ἡ εὐπραξία τέλος.
>
> For production has its end in something other than itself, but action does not, since its end is acting well itself. (*NE* VI.4 1140b7-8)

I label these passages Text I and Text II because I will refer to them as such later in this section. What Aristotle seems to be saying in these passages, and what many commentators have taken him to mean, is that action differs from production in that action does not aim at anything beyond itself, while production aims exclusively at a product. Furthermore, what the virtuous person desires as an end is not the results of his good acting (for that would be to think of his acting as a production), but rather just the good acting itself. As Politis (1998) does, let's call this "the action thesis". The action thesis states that the product of productive action cannot be an end of desire and that only non-productive action is the end of desire.

If Aristotle endorses this thesis, it creates many problems for him, and also for the account of choosing a virtuous action for itself for which I have argued in the previous section. The main problem is that virtuous actions – such as generous, just, and courageous actions – seem to aim at bringing about good states of affairs. But the action thesis entails that, in performing a virtuous action, the agent does not aim at bringing

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[241] Translation belongs to Politis (1998).

about a good state of affairs, for that would be to treat his action as a production, and productions aim at products, and products are not ends of desire.[242] Rather, the action thesis entails that, in performing a virtuous action, the agent's only aim is good performance of the action itself (εὐπραξία).[243] What makes this problem all the more acute is that in the above passages Aristotle does not merely say, like in the I.7 passage, that we choose actions for two different reasons. Rather, the above passages seem to *rule out* that the virtuous agent aims at results beyond his actions. Aristotle says quite clearly that the end of action is just acting well itself. He does not say that we act both for the sake of acting well and for the sake of the results of acting.

Irwin is particularly aware of the problems created by the action thesis:

> What does Aristotle mean by distinguishing action from production? He will face serious difficulties if he does not allow the same event to be both an action (insofar as it is done for its own sake) and a production (insofar as it is done for the sake of some end external to it). Many events that are virtuous actions, and as such decided on for themselves, are also productions; consider, for instance, a magnificent person's effort to have a suitable warship equipped.[244]

As Irwin notes, one and the same event can be both an action and a production, as many events that are virtuous actions are also productions. My generous action of donating money to Oxfam is an event that is also a production insofar as it results in people getting

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[242] Some commentators have even gone as far as to use the action thesis to interpret Aristotle in a strongly Kantian vein, according to which actions are not valued at all for their good consequences but rather only for the action's intrinsic features.[242] Just as Kant thinks that "an action done from duty has its moral worth, not in the purpose to be attained by it, but in the maxim in accordance with which it is decided upon", so too on Aristotle's view, the thought goes, the moral value of an action depends not on results but rather on something internal to the action itself. E.g. Korsgaard (1996).

[243] As noted by Politis (1998, 354): "For it rules out that something other than action, but to be produced or brought about by action, should be an end of desire, e.g. a state of affairs."

[244] Irwin (1999, 242). See also Ackrill (1978, 213): "Commentators discussing this distinction often fail to face the real difficulty, that actions often or always *are* productions, and productions often or always *are* actions."

what they need. But even if Aristotle does allow that one and the same event can be both an action and a production, his view still seems to be that the agent cares primarily about the event *qua* action, not *qua* production. Aware of this, David Charles has analyzed a generous action, such as building a house with Habitat for Humanity, into two numerically distinct but concomitant acts – 1) the generous action, which is chosen for its own sake, and 2) the act of producing a house, which is chosen for the sake of providing shelter to the homeless, and then to treat the productive act as a means to the end of performing a generous action.[245] But if this were the correct analysis, it would mean that the agent benefits others for the sake of performing generous actions, and then it really would appear that the agent benefits others ultimately for the sake of actualizing his own capacities (something we tried to avoid in section 4.1.2).

Before addressing the question of how this problem may be solved, it is important to understand that the action thesis poses no problem whatsoever for my argument that virtuous actions are chosen both for themselves and for the sake of one's own *eudaimonia.* The reason for this is that one's own *eudaimonia* consists in one's own acting well. The eudaimonic benefits provided by virtuous actions are not things beyond the actions themselves, but rather are internal to the actions. The action thesis only poses a problem for my argument that virtuous actions can be chosen both for themselves and for the sake of the good states of affairs that they bring about – states of affairs in which other people are benefited.

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[245] Charles (1986, 119-144). Whiting (2002) claims that this "gets things exactly the wrong way round. The virtuous agent performs generous actions for the sake of benefiting others; she does not benefit others for the sake of performing generous actions or even for the sake of exercising her generosity." On my reading, the agent performs a generous action both for the sake of exercising his generosity, and for the sake of benefiting others.

I believe, however, that the Book VI passages above have been misinterpreted. That is, I do not think that they endorse the action thesis because I do not think that they endorse the claim that the virtuous agent ought not to be concerned with the results of his actions – the particular ends at which his actions aim. To show this, we should focus first on Text II and pay close attention to its context in *NE* VI.5. This is the chapter in which Aristotle sets out to define what practical wisdom is (φρόνησις). He also says in this passage what practical wisdom is *not,* namely that it is not science (ἐπιστήμη) and it is not craft knowledge (τέχνη). That it is not craft knowledge is especially what causes him to say that action does not aim at anything beyond itself at 1140b7. A look at this chapter as a whole shows that Aristotle cannot mean that the agent ought not be concerned with the results of his actions.

At the start of the chapter Aristotle claims that it is the mark of the practically wise man "to be able to deliberate well about what is good and advantageous for himself (περὶ τὰ αὑτῷ ἀγαθὰ καὶ συμφέροντα), not about some restricted area – about what sorts of things promote health or strength, for instance – but about what sorts of thing promote living well in general" (*NE* VI.5 1140a25-28). It is interesting what Aristotle takes to be an indication of this:

> σημεῖον δ' ὅτι καὶ τοὺς περί τι φρονίμους λέγομεν, ὅταν πρὸς τέλος τι σπουδαῖον εὖ λογίσωνται, ὧν μή ἐστι τέχνη.
>
> A sign of this is the fact that we call people practically wise about some [restricted area] whenever they calculate well to promote some excellent end in an area where there is no craft. (*NE* VI. 1140a29-31)

The fact that he calculates well in an area where there is no craft is crucial, for Aristotle will go on a few lines later to say that practical wisdom is not craft knowledge. The *reason* he gives for this is that "action and production belong to different kinds,"

(1140b3-4) and that "production has its end in something other than itself, but action does not, since its end is acting well itself" (1140b7-8).

But in the passage just quoted above (VI.5 1140a29-31) it seems that the practically wise person *does* try to promote a good end (τέλος τι σπουδαῖον), where the end is not simply good acting itself. Also, consider the examples Aristotle gives of the kinds of people he considers practically wise:

> That is why Pericles and such people are the ones whom we regard as practically wise, because they are able to study what is good for themselves and for human beings; we think that household managers and politicians are such people. (*NE* VI.5 1140b9-12)

Could Aristotle actually think that Pericles, other politicians, and household managers *do not* aim at trying to achieve good results in their actions? Could he actually think that what makes them *practically wise* is that they aim at nothing beyond acting well – that they *do not* aim at good states of affairs? That is incredibly unlikely. In addition, consider the fact that Aristotle very closely associates practical wisdom with foresight (προνοητικήν) and advantage (τὰ συμφέροντα). Even some of the lower animals show signs of having some degree of practical wisdom, Aristotle thinks, at least "as many as appear to have a capacity for foresight concerning their own lives (ὅσα περὶ τὸν αὐτῶν βίον ἔχοντα φαίνεται δύναμιν προνοητικήν) (*NE* VI.5 1141a27-28). People like Anaxagoras and Thales, on the other hand, *because they are ignorant about the things that are to their own advantage,* lack practical wisdom: (διὸ Ἀναξαγόραν καὶ Θαλῆν καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους σοφοὺς μὲν φρονίμους δ' οὔ φασιν εἶναι, ὅταν ἴδωσιν ἀγνοοῦντας τὰ συμφέροντα ἑαυτοῖς...) (*NE* VI.5 1141b3-7). These remarks strongly suggest that Aristotle thinks that the practically wise person is so-called precisely because he aims at advantageous outcomes and succeeds in achieving them.

But then we must determine just what he means when he distinguishes practical wisdom from craft knowledge (τέχνη). He says that the practically wise are able to calculate well in order to promote some excellent end in an area where there is no craft (*NE* VI. 1140a29-31). One reason for thinking that practical wisdom cannot be craft knowledge is that, if it were craft knowledge, then there would or could be something like an instruction manual one could follow if one wanted to know how to hit the mean in some situation. So, if practical wisdom were craft knowledge, then when the statesman goes about determining how to best secure the well-being of his *polis,* all he would have to do is consult the manual and follow the rules. But practical matters are not like this.[246] There are no steadfast general rules one can just apply to get the right answer, which is probably why Aristotle ultimately says no more than that the practically wise thing to do is whatever the actual practically wise person does.

But Aristotle does not appeal to these reasons. Instead, the reason he gives for why practical wisdom cannot be craft knowledge is that action and production are different (1140b3-4). He then gives his definition of practical wisdom, and supports it by reference to the distinction between action and production:

> The remaining possibility, then, is that practical wisdom is a state grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a human being. For (γάρ) production has its end in something other than itself, but action does not, since its end is acting well itself. (*NE* VI.5 1140b5-8)

Here we find the statement of the action thesis, or so it seems. We have understood the last sentence of this passage to mean that the end of the desire of the practically wise person is nothing beyond his good acting, meaning that he is not concerned with results.

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[246] The fact that practical matters are not like this is more than mere coincidence, for Aristotle. He thinks that practical matters are, *by nature,* not conducive to sweeping general principles that purport to guide correctly in all circumstances. See *NE* II.9 1109b13-26.

That sort of concern is for producers. But, I claim, we should *not* so understand that sentence. We should not understand it in that way for the reasons previously given, and also because it makes no sense as an explanation of the preceding sentence (γάρ). If practical wisdom is concerned with action *about things that are good or bad for a human being,* then it is not merely concerned with action. It is also concerned with τὰ ἀνθρώπῳ ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακά. In the next section, I argue for a different and better way of understanding that sentence.

5.4. Action and Production: An Alternative Interpretation

"Production has its end in something other than itself, but action does not, since its end is acting well itself." I interpret this sentence to mean the following: Production succeeds purely, and solely, insofar as the product comes about. What occurred during the production does not matter so long as the product results. In this way, production has its end entirely in something other than itself. Action, on the other hand, succeeds *not solely* insofar as it brings about its intended result. The goal of an action is to bring about the intended result *in a certain kind of way.* When the intended result is brought about virtuously, we have good acting - εὐπραξία. This interpretation allows us to make better sense of the VI.2 passage quoted earlier, is supported by another passage not yet examined in VI.5, and generally makes much more sense given the surrounding context in VI.5. I turn first to VI.2.

It will be helpful to once again quote the relevant passage in its entirety:

> διάνοια δ' αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ, ἀλλ' ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική· αὕτη γὰρ καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἄρχει: ἕνεκα γάρ του ποιεῖ πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν, καὶ οὐ τέλος ἁπλῶς (ἀλλὰ πρός τι καὶ τινός) τὸ ποιητόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ πρακτόν· ἡ γὰρ εὐπραξία τέλος, ἡ δ' ὄρεξις τούτου.

> Intellect itself, however, moves nothing, but only the intellect which is for the sake of something and which is practical; for this also rules over the productive intellect, since every one who produces produces for an end, and that which is produced is not an end in the unqualified sense (but only relative to something and of something) – only that which is done is that; for good action is the end, and the desire aims at this. (*NE* VI.2 1139a5-b4)

Aristotle claims in this passage that practical intellect rules over productive intellect because producers produce for an end, and the product is not an unqualified end – it is not a τέλος ἁπλῶς.

On my interpretation, I take Aristotle to primarily be making the point that *it matters* how we bring about our goals. A product *as such* – whether it is a house, or a state of affairs in which hungry people get fed – is not an unqualified end because it is possible to bring it about in a vicious or at an rate illegitimate way. A producer, *qua producer*, is only concerned with bringing the product into being. How he does so does not matter. *This* is why practical intellect must rule the productive intellect. This is why only "that which is done" (πρακτόν) is a τέλος ἁπλῶς – because *praxis* is concerned not merely with bringing about results, but with bringing about results *virtuously.*[247] So when Aristotle says that "good action is the end and desire aims at this", he does not mean that the practical intellect is not concerned with bringing about results. It is

[247] Kraut (1976, 234) claims that by calling actions unqualified ends and by denying that physical products are unqualified ends, Aristotle "surely has in mind his earlier distinction between those ends that are final or complete (*teleion*) and those that are not (1097a25-34). Such ends as 'wealth, flutes, and all instruments' fail to be final, Aristotle says, because they are desired only for the sake of other things; final ends are those that are desired for themselves. (And the most final end, happiness, is one which is always desired for itself, and never for the sake of something else.) So, a physical product is not an 'end in an unqualified way' in that it is never desired for its own sake." My reading is not necessarily in tension with Kraut's reading. The reason, I think, that products as such are not desired for themselves is that it matters how they are brought about. They can, in a sense, become unqualified ends if they are brought about in the right way. And when they are, it is the good action as a whole – the virtuous bringing about of an end – that is desired for its own sake.

concerned with bringing about results, but its main concern is bringing about those results in the right way.

If practical wisdom were merely craft knowledge, then it would not matter how the *phronimos* brings about his good ends. Consider this passage in VI.5:

> ἀλλὰ μὴν τέχνης μὲν ἔστιν ἀρετὴ, φρονήσεως δ' οὐκ ἔστιν· καὶ ἐν μὲν τέχνῃ ὁ ἑκὼν ἁμαρτάνων αἱρετώτερος, περὶ δὲ φρόνησιν ἧττον, ὥσπερ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἀρετάς.
>
> Moreover, there is virtue [or vice in the use] of craft, but not [in the use] of practical wisdom. In a craft, someone who makes errors voluntarily is more choiceworthy; but with practical wisdom, as with the virtues, the reverse is true. (*NE* VI.5 1140b23-25)

What is found in this passage, I believe, is one of Aristotle's main reasons for wanting to distinguish between action and production and for claiming that practical wisdom cannot be craft knowledge. If practical wisdom were merely craft knowledge, then our actions would be mere productions. If our actions were mere productions, then it would not matter how we brought about our ends, but only *that* we brought those ends about. For example, if practical wisdom were merely craft knowledge, it would be acceptable for the practically wise person to bring about good ends in bad ways.[248] Suppose you want to donate a large sum of money to Oxfam in order to benefit the underprivileged, but as a means to this you successfully rob a bank. If practical wisdom were merely craft knowledge, such an action would have to count as practically wise. But this cannot be right, Aristotle says, because the end of action is acting well, which means intending to bring about, say, a just result *in a just manner.* We need not understand εὐπραξία to mean acting well with no regard to the particular end one is trying to achieve. εὐπραξία

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[248] Or bad ends in bad ways.

is an unqualified end for the virtuous agent because it involves not just acting, and not just results, but acting in the right way to bring about the right results.[249]

Aristotle, therefore, does not endorse the action thesis. Therefore, the interpretation previously argued for regarding what it means to choose a virtuous action for itself, is safe. In choosing to perform a generous action, the agent surely can aim at bringing about the intended result of that action.

6. Conclusion

I have argued that Aristotle holds that a virtuous action is chosen for itself by being chosen for its essential features. One feature of any virtuous action refers plainly to the agent's own *eudaimonia*. Since a virtuous action is an actualization of the agent's capacity for virtue, it is chosen for itself precisely insofar as it is chosen for the sake of the agent's *eudaimonia*. In addition, some virtuous actions have features that refer plainly to the good of other people, since some virtuous actions (but not all) are aimed at benefiting other people. A just action would not be a just action if not for the fact that the agent performing the action properly distributed benefits among certain others. It is logically compatible with the constitutive solution, therefore, that the agent chooses the action for this feature of it as well. But he does not benefit others merely as a means to actualizing his own capacities.

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[249] As it happens, I have discovered that Broadie (2002, 368), in her commentary, basically shares my interpretation of the distinction between action and production. She writes: "The question governing production is 'What is the best I can do *to achieve special end* T?' whereas the question governing good action is 'What is the best I can *do*?' This does not mean (as is sometimes thought) that the wise agent does not seek means to ends, or does not act for the sake of ulterior objectives, or that he is concerned only with his action as opposed to its consequences ('action for its own sake'). Doing *M*-for-the-sake-of-*O*, and doing *A*-with-foreseeable-consequences-*C, D, E* are familiar kinds of doing (*praxis*), and he asks whether doing something like that is the best he can do." See also Broadie (1991, 202-212).

There will be some who will still find the picture we have ended up with morally unattractive. Some will object that, when the agent performs a virtuous action that aims at benefiting other people, *the very presence* of his thought that he is actualizing his own capacities and in that way achieving his own *eudaimonia* undermines and spoils his thought that he is benefiting others, and so undermines his moral worth.[250] The agent might still be considered to have "one thought too many", as it were. It is at this juncture that the objector and Aristotle will have reached an impasse. Moral virtue is, by nature, something good for the agent who has it, according to Aristotle. One simply cannot strive to be virtuous without concomitantly striving to better one's own condition. As one astute scholar has remarked: "We may regard this as the corruption of morality; Aristotle regards it as its beauty."[251]

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[250] Annas (1988, 12), Whiting (2002, 283-285).

[251] Rogers (1994, 302).

V

Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I first sum up the findings of the dissertation. Secondly, I suggest some ways in which the findings may lead to future work. Thirdly and lastly, I consider the problem of motivation purely as a philosophical problem, not as Aristotle's problem, and I consider the merits of each solution within this context.[252] I conclude that while overdetermination does the best job of capturing the ways in which most people actually are motivated in their behavior, it is the solution I've attributed to Aristotle that is the neatest solution philosophically, and as well gives us something to aspire to.

1. Summary of the Findings

In summing up the findings of this work, let us deal separately with each case, first with friendship and then with virtue and happiness. As we have seen, Aristotle says that the virtuous agent values his friend for the friend's sake, and also for the sake of his own *eudaimonia.* In Chapter II, after examining the relevant passages, we rejected unintentional self love, which claims that Aristotle does not think that the agent is motivated to love and benefit his friend by self-interested reasons at all. The passages clearly affirm that Aristotle does think that we value our friends because of how they stand in relation to our own *eudaimonia.* We then considered the overdetermination solution and found that the best version of that solution claims that the motives are

[252] I thank Professor Sher for encouraging me to take this up in the concluding portion of the dissertation.

independent of each other, and that when the circumstances prevent the agent from having the self-regarding motive, the other-regarding motive suffices for action. But we found that Aristotle does not recognize such circumstances, which strongly suggested that he did not accept the standard meaning of choosing something for itself. We then considered the constitutive solution, according to which we value our friends for themselves precisely insofar as we value them as essential constituent components of our own *eudaimonia.* We found this view to be morally problematic because it did not respect the separate good of the friend.

But then in Chapter III, we found that Aristotle's account of the single soul of friendship provided a much-needed foundation to the constitutive solution, while also going beyond that solution. Through the activity of *nous* in shared-living (συζῆν), friends become reciprocally shaped affective unities. By becoming such unities, the respective *eudaimonia* of each friend *does* become intertwined in such a way that talk of a "separate good" is misplaced, for friends don't have separate goods. In addition, each friend *is* what the other has made him to be in a way that both explains and justifies having the We-Attitude, and in a way that makes for what we have called "we-desires" according to the We-Desire Principle.

In Chapter IV, we took up the problem in the case of virtue and happiness and demonstrated once again that unintentional self-love and overdetermination were inadequate, and that Aristotle did not accept the standard meaning of choosing something for itself. We showed that the constitutive solution solved the problem and also that it was able to answer the objection that it created for a morally unattractive agent. Along the way, we showed that Aristotle does not hold "the action thesis" according to which

the agent does not aim at anything beyond his own acting. We ended up with a view according to which virtuous actions are chosen for the features that make them virtuous. One feature of any virtuous action refers plainly to the agent's own *eudaimonia*. Since a virtuous action is an actualization of the agent's capacity for virtue, it is chosen for itself precisely insofar as it is chosen for the sake of the agent's *eudaimonia*. In addition, some virtuous actions have features that refer plainly to the good of other people, since some virtuous actions (but not all) are aimed at benefiting other people. The agent therefore chooses the action for this feature of it as well, without the thought that he benefits others merely as a way of actualizing his own capacities.

2. Future Research Questions

One aspect of Aristotle's ethics that particularly stands out as a result of this work is the sharp distinction he draws between friends and non-friends. As noted in Chapter II section 2.3, Aristotle thinks that justice not only permits us to be partial to our friends, but also *requires* us to be partial to our friends. Why is it morally worse to harm a friend than a non-friend, and why do the prescriptions of justice carry more weight with respect to friends than with respect to non-friends? These are puzzling claims, ones that stand in stark opposition to the popular modern idea that ethics and impartiality go hand in hand, and ones that have received surprisingly little scholarly attention. One possible answer to those questions suggested by this dissertation is that because friends are other selves, we owe more to them. This would suggest that we owe more to ourselves than to others, according to Aristotle, which would be consistent with his claim at *NE* IX.8 that the virtuous person loves himself most of all.

Related to the previous points, the dissertation raises questions about the status of friendship *as a virtue.* Is friendship a distinct character state (ἕξις) just as generosity, courage, temperance and the like are distinct character states? I am inclined to answer 'no' – that friendship is not a virtue in the same way as the others. It ought to be recognized that it is not even clear that actions taken on behalf of one's friends are virtuous actions at all in the technical sense. What I mean is, when one acts to benefit one's friend in the ordinary way that friends do (say, I offer to help my friend learn ancient Greek), it is not clear that any of the particular virtues of character are being manifested. Of course, one could be generous or just to a friend in the Aristotelian sense, but many if not most of the actions we take on behalf of our friends are not properly characterized as generous or just in that sense.[253] Friendship itself, Aristotle says, is "some virtue" (ἀρετὴ τις), or "involves virtue" (μετ' ἀρετῆς) (*NE* VIII.1 1155a4). I find the uses of τις and μετ' to be significant, for Aristotle never actually says plainly that friendship is a virtue.

Conversely, the kind of actions that we do take on behalf of our friends are typically not the kind of actions we would take on behalf of a non-friend. Aristotle recognizes no virtue of what we call benevolence, and the only arena where something resembling that seems to take place is friendship. Aristotle only mentions the importance of valuing another person for that person's sake in his account of friendship. It does not appear in his account of virtue of character. What appears there is rather the claim that *virtue* itself and virtuous *action* must be chosen for its own sake. This is why I have

[253] Generosity (ἐλευθεριότης) is strictly about the giving and taking of money, according to Aristotle. So to teach one's friend or anyone else how to read ancient Greek is not, strictly speaking, generous.

treated the two cases separately in this dissertation. But the nature of their separation may call for more exploration.

Finally, I suggested at the very end of Chapter IV that Aristotle and his objector have reached an impasse at a certain point. The objector sees self-love as inherently non-moral (or in some cases even *im*moral), whereas Aristotle sees self-love, properly construed, as central to friendship and virtue. What I have tried to do throughout the dissertation is uncover the philosophical commitments of Aristotle that explain his holding this view. In friendship, I've argued that Aristotle's view on the role of self-love in friendship does not have the morally objectionable implication that many believe it has because he thinks that true friends are a single-soul. And in the case of virtue, I've argued that because of what virtue is essentially, and because to choose virtue for itself is to choose it for what it is essentially (according to Aristotle), Aristotle therefore thinks that self-regarding motives are necessary.

But we may even want more of an explanation for the impasse between Aristotle and his objector. And it may be the case that many of Aristotle's philosophical assumptions and commitments are driven by cultural-specific considerations having to do with convention and tradition, considerations that we moderns do not share. Therefore, there may very well be room for discussion of the possibility that friendship and virtue are shaped by such considerations.[254]

4. The Problem of Motivation (Briefly) Revisited

[254] I thank Professor Mackie for making this point salient to me.

It is a fine line that a historian of philosophy has to tread when treating a philosophical problem that arises in the text of a great figure such as Aristotle – a fine line between maintaining textual fidelity and attributing to the figure the views that may best get the job done of solving the problem. I have tried to the best of my ability to not let philosophical biases cloud judgment concerning which solution to the problem of motivation is most clearly *Aristotle's.* In this final section of the dissertation, I'd like to briefly consider the problem of motivation as the problem that it is rather than as specifically Aristotle's problem. Instead of taking the text as my guiding standard, I shall consider the merits of each solution purely in its own right. I will not separate the problem into two cases (friendship and virtue) as I did throughout the dissertation. I will rather consider the problem more generally to cover all actions that we take on behalf of others, whether friends, relatives, coworkers, acquaintances, or strangers.

We'll start with unintentional self-love. This solution came in several varieties, and the only viable one to consider here is the sophisticated-consequentialist version according to which the best way to achieve one's own happiness is to not aim at it. To be happy, according to this view, one must not try to be happy and instead focus on making others happy. It is sometimes true that we do better at achieving our ends when we're not so consciously focused on achieving them. But to solve the problem, we need more than just for this to be true. What also needs to be true is that, by not having the self-regarding motive *in this way* (i.e. not having that motive for the reason that the sophisticated consequentialist does not have it), the agent is thereby morally off the hook. It needs to be the case that because he does not have the motive in that way, he's no longer morally

blameworthy for being selfish. But sophisticated-consequentialist reasoning cannot get the agent off the hook.

A person who decides to become a sophisticated consequentialist has come to realize that he is not doing a very good job of making himself happy. He seeks a better way, so he decides to try to rid himself of his motive to care for his own happiness. So, suppose he does this. Suppose he rids himself of the motive, and then starts to do a very good job of making himself happy. Does he come to realize that he's happy? Let's suppose he does. Then once he realizes that he's happy, does he realize how he made himself happy? Again, let's suppose he does. At that moment he must say to himself: "Well, this is working. I should continue not to be motivated by my own happiness so that I can continue to be happy." Surely such an agent cannot escape blameworthiness, if indeed it is blameworthy to help others ultimately for the sake of one's own happiness. This agent may perform particular actions from other-regarding motives, but his life is no doubt still guided overall by the self-regarding motive. I suppose it is possible that this agent will never quite realize that he's happy, and so will never consider how he has succeeded in making himself happy, but what is the point of making yourself happy if you never enjoy it? While being a sophisticated consequentialist may sometimes be good from a strategic point of view with respect to achieving one's own ends, it does not make for an adequate solution to the problem of motivation.

I hold the overdetermination solution in higher regard, mainly for the reason that I think it adequately captures how most of us are motivated in everyday life. The world is complicated, and people are complicated, and there are not many *phronimoi* out there whose motives are so integrated and never waver. The best version of the

overdetermination solution is the one according to which both self-regarding and other-regarding motives cause one act rightly, while other-regarding motives would suffice for action if circumstances prevented the efficacy of self-regarding motives.[255] While the overdetermination solution is attractive given how well it captures common behavior, I think it has two problems that ought to be addressed. Consider the following case:

> **Party[1]:** Eugene is a first year Ph.D. student in the philosophy department at Harvard, and coming up in a few days is the annual start-of-the-year department party, hosted by the chair of the department. First year students are strongly urged to attend this party, because the department likes for there to be a strong rapport among the graduate students, and the party is a great way to get to know one's new colleagues. So Eugene feels the pull of being professionally obligated to go to the party, which gives him an other-regarding motive. But Eugene also knows that there will be free food at the party, and nothing is more enticing to a poor young graduate student than a free meal. This gives him a strong self-regarding motive to go to the party.

I think the overdetermination solution can perfectly well take care of this case - a case that I think typifies many of our ordinary dealings and encounters. If Eugene were not motivated at all by the other-regarding consideration, then we would blame him, however mildly. But if it's the case that both motives contribute to getting him to go to the party, and also that it is the case that even if there were no free food at the party he would still go, then no harm, no foul. The other-regarding motive is the dominant one, and Eugene escapes blame.

But now let's change the case a little bit:

> **Party[2]:** Eugene is a first year Ph.D. student in the philosophy department at Harvard, and coming up in a few days is the annual start-of-the-year department party, hosted by the chair of the department. First year students are strongly urged to attend this party, because the department likes for there to be a strong rapport among the graduate students, and the party is a great way to get to know one's new colleagues. So Eugene feels

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[255] How this version of overdetermination solves the conceptual difficulty need not be rehearsed here. I shall focus solely on the moral difficulty of the problem of motivation.

> the pull of being professionally obligated to go to the party, which gives him an other-regarding motive. But Eugene also suffers from recurring bouts of kleptomania. He likes to steal things. And he knows that the chair of the department happens to have a whole lot of money and a great big house out in the mansion district of town. He wants to go to the party in order to scope out the house and see if he can get away with stealing some valuables. This is his self-regarding motive.

Suppose both motives contribute to getting Eugene to go to the party, but that it is true that Eugene would still go to the party out of professional obligation even if the chair of the department lived in a shack and owned nothing of value. Still, it is clear that our little heist-master does not escape blame in virtue of the truth of that counterfactual. Now, why is this? The answer I think is clear: the self-regarding motive in this case is just too rotten for any amount of other-regarding concern to sufficiently dilute it.

This is one problem, then, with the overdetermination solution – that it is futile when the self-regarding motive is especially bad. What this suggests is that it's not merely the truth of the counterfactual that is doing the work of dispelling the moral difficulty of the problem of motivation. The nature of the self-regarding motive matters too, perhaps just as much. The worse the self-regarding motive, the less effective the truth of the counterfactual will be. The better the self-regarding motive, the more effective the truth of the counterfactual will be. The overdetermination solution is therefore incomplete without a separate account of what it is that makes for adequate self-regarding motives.

There is a different problem I detect in the overdetermination solution that may be more serious. Asking the following question may state the problem: Why should the truth of the counterfactual even matter at all? Whatever the truth of the counterfactual suggests, the fact remains that in the actual case the agent does, in fact, have both

motives. Now, if it is assumed that self-regarding motives spoil other-regarding motives, why does the self-regarding motive not spoil the other-regarding motive just because of the truth of the counter-factual? The answer to this question would seem to be: because if the counterfactual is true, the self-regarding motive *need not be present* in the actual case. But is this a good answer? I think not. It seems to me that to say that the self-regarding motive need not be present does not explain why it *does not* spoil the other-regarding motive when it *is* present. Is the answer perhaps that the truth of the counterfactual suggests that the other-regarding motive is the *stronger* motive in the actual case? This was our working assumption in Chapter II. The matter was not explored further as it was determined that Aristotle's text did not countenance the overdetermination solution at any rate. But I don't think that even this is a good answer to our question. For it does not necessarily follow from the truth of the counterfactual that the other-regarding motive is the stronger motive in the actual case. Furthermore, we have already seen that no matter how strong the other-regarding motive may be, some self-regarding motives are so bad as to leave the agent irrevocably blameworthy.

At the very least, then, the overdetermination solution needs to say more about both the nature of self-regarding motives and about the explanatory force of the truth of the counterfactuals. I don't mean to suggest that these problems cannot be overcome, but only that the overdetermination solution is not as neat as it may seem. My main worry is that it may be the case that the counterfactual does no work at all, but that what really does the work of explaining away the moral worry is the very nature of the self-regarding motive itself. The worry, then, is that when the self-regarding motive is blameworthy at

all, the truth of the counterfactual will be impotent. But when the self-regarding motive is *not* blameworthy, then the truth of the counterfactual will be unnecessary.

This brings us to the constitutive solution, which I think is by far the most exotic and the most demanding solution. It is this feature of it that is its main drawback. It is so demanding because it basically requires single-soulhood between two people (in the case of friends)[256], as explained in Chapter III, and otherwise requires of an agent that he or she be an Aristotelian *phronimos* (in the case of non-friends), as explained in Chapter IV. As I mentioned earlier in this section, there are not too many people like that. And there are certainly not many people with whom we have single-soulhood. Here it is necessary to distinguish between our friends and those who are not our friends, for the constitutive solution works differently for each. Single-soulhood is only possible among friends, and it makes the We-Attitude possible. In the case of non-friends, we perform those other-regarding virtuous actions on their behalf because of what virtue essentially is. Here we act both for the sake of actualizing our own capacities (self-regarding) and because someone is in need (other-regarding), but in a way that is not quite the same as the overdetermination solution (see Chapter IV). As I mentioned at the very end of Chapter IV, not everyone will find that the moral worry is assuaged by the constitutive solution in the case of non-friends.

But what is so philosophically neat about the constitutive solution is that it makes the self-regarding and other-regarding motives converge into a single motive. I'll do what my friend needs because insofar as he needs it, *we* need it. I'll act virtuously because that is what my well-being is all about. Now the conditions that need to be met

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[256] Remember that I have said that the account of the single-soul can be thought of as providing a needed foundation for the constitutive solution. It is that account that shows that the constitutive solution does not have the morally troubling implication that friends do not properly value each other.

in order for that to happen may indeed be very demanding. It takes a lot for it to really be true that my friend's well-being is constitutive of my own well-being (and *vice versa*), and it takes a lot for someone to develop the Aristotelian virtues of character. But when those conditions are met, something pretty extraordinary happens, something to which I think is worth aspiring. And Aristotle's ethics is, as one venerable scholar once noted, an ethics of aspiration.[257]

[257] See Richard Taylor's *Virtue Ethics* (2002).

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